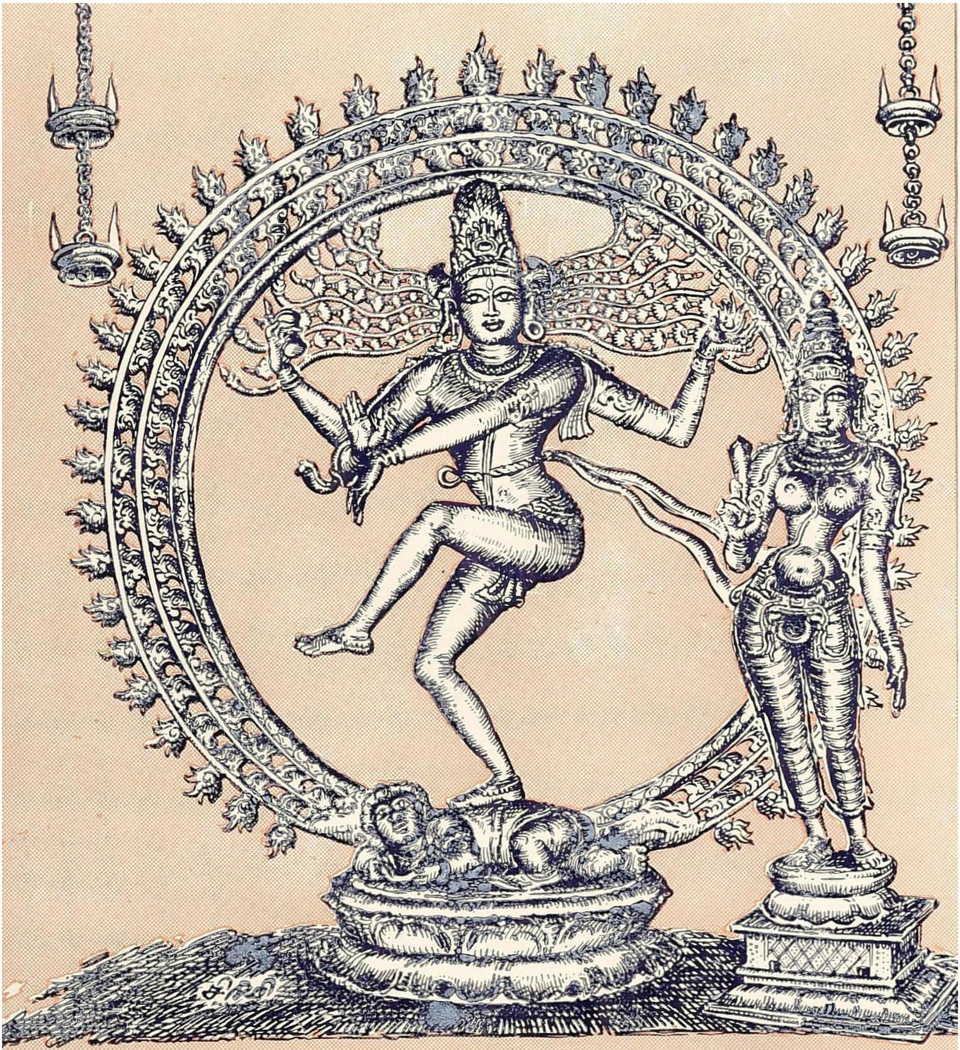
The University's Environs

J. M. SOMASUNDARAM

ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

WITH COURAGE AND FAITH



(*Courtesy :* Ananda Vikatan)

" தில்லைப் பதியுடையான் சிற்றம் பலந்தன்னில்
அல்லும் பகலுநின் றாடுகிறான்—எல்லைக்கண்
அண்ணாமலை மன் அமைத்த கலைக்கழகம்
கண்ணாரக் கண்டு களித்து "—

கவிமணி தேசிகவிநாயகம் பிள்ளை.

DEDICATED

TO

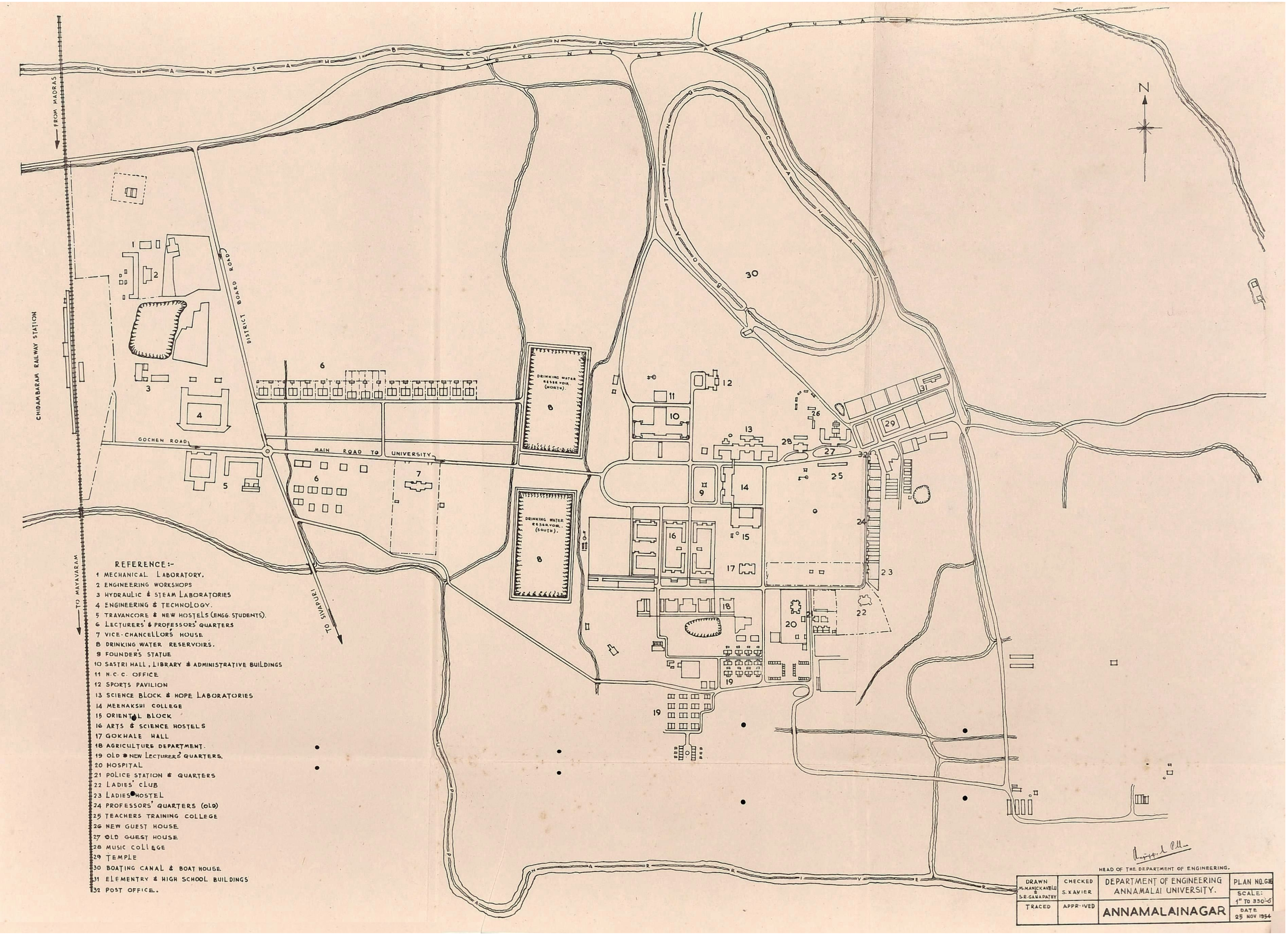
Dr. RAJAH SIR M. A. MUTHIAH CHETTIAR OF CHETTINAD,
Kt. B.A., D.Litt., M.L.A.

Pro-Chancellor, Annamalai University

PRINCE AND PATRON OF LETTERS

in

PROFOUND GRATITUDE



FROM MADRAS
CHIDAMBARAM RAILWAY STATION
DISTRICT BOARD ROAD
GOCHEN ROAD
MAIN ROAD TO UNIVERSITY
TO SIVAPURI
TO MAYAVARAM
DRINKING WATER RESERVOIR (NORTH)
DRINKING WATER RESERVOIR (SOUTH)
N
REFERENCE:-
1 MECHANICAL LABORATORY.
2 ENGINEERING WORKSHOPS
3 HYDRAULIC & STEAM LABORATORIES
4 ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY.
5 TRAVANCORE & NEW HOSTELS (ENGG. STUDENTS).
6 LECTURERS' & PROFESSORS' QUARTERS
7 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S HOUSE
8 DRINKING WATER RESERVOIRS.
9 FOUNDER'S STATUE
10 SASTRI HALL, LIBRARY & ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDINGS
11 N.C.C. OFFICE
12 SPORTS PAVILION
13 SCIENCE BLOCK & HOPE LABORATORIES
14 MEENAKSHI COLLEGE
15 ORIENTAL BLOCK
16 ARTS & SCIENCE HOSTELS
17 GOKHALE HALL
18 AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT.
19 OLD & NEW LECTURERS' QUARTERS.
20 HOSPITAL
21 POLICE STATION & QUARTERS
22 LADIES' CLUB
23 LADIES HOSTEL
24 PROFESSORS' QUARTERS (OLD)
25 TEACHERS TRAINING COLLEGE
26 NEW GUEST HOUSE
27 OLD GUEST HOUSE
28 MUSIC COLLEGE
29 TEMPLE
30 BOATING CANAL & BOAT HOUSE
31 ELEMENTRY & HIGH SCHOOL BUILDINGS
32 POST OFFICE.
HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING.
DRAWN
M. MANICKAVELU & S.R. GANAPATHY
CHECKED
S. XAVIER
TRACED
APPROVED
DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY.
ANNAMALAINAGAR
SCALE: 1" TO 330'-0"
DATE 25 NOV 1954

SILVER JUBILEE OF THE ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

The University's Environs,

Cultural and Historical

BY

J. M. SOMASUNDARAM PILLAI, B.A., B.L.,

ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

ANNAMALAINAGAR

1955

By the Same Author

The Great Temple at Tanjore
Palni-the Sacred Hill of Muruga
The Five Tamil Idylls of Pattuppattu
A Plan for Tiruchendur
Tiruchendur—
the Sea-shore Temple of Subrahmanyam
Cholar Koyir-Panigal
Palni Tala-Varalaru
Tanjai Tiruk-Koyilgal

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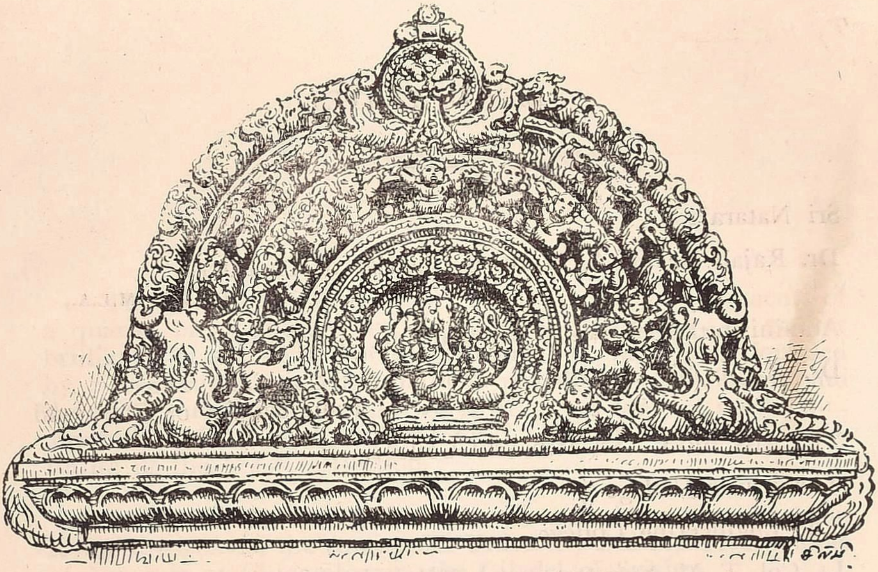

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The Music College

The Engineering College

Lt. Col. T. M. Narayanaswamy Pillai, M.A., B.L., M.L.C.

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Acknowledgments

The Annamalai University with its unique achievements of a quarter of a century now enters upon another era of greater brilliance in the service of the Nation. To have been founded by a God-minded benefactor and prophetic educationist, and flourishing under the tender care of his gifted son and successor— another noble patron of Arts and Letters augurs well for the future of the great institution.

This small volume purposes to be a Guide and companion to the Environs of the Annamalai University and the Great temple of Nataraja at Chidambaram, the Citadel of Saivism.

My heartfelt thanks are due to the authorities of the University for permitting me to bring out this token of my gratitude to the House of the Founder of the University, whom I consider my privilege to serve.

I am grateful to Prof. A. Ramanathan Pillai, Deputy to the Vice-Chancellor, and Sri T. D. Meenakchisundaram Pillai, Registrar, whose encouragement and helpfulness have made it possible for me to bring out this book on this auspicious occasion; my sincere thanks are due to Rao Bahadur N. Visvanathier, former Registrar, for his kindness in reading the script, furnishing much useful information and making many valuable suggestions; to Sri T. N. Ramachandran, Joint Director-General of Archaeology in India and Sri R. Parthasarathy, Director of Information and Publicity, Government of Madras, for the photographs that adorn this books; to Sri S. S. Vasan for generously permitting me thé ūse of the beautiful pen and ink Sketches of the sculptural wealth of Chidambaram temple, published originally as a prominent feature in the pages of "Ananda Vikatan" and to Sri V. T. Rajan, Proprietor, Rajan & Co. (Printers) for bringing out this volume at a short notice, in an excellent manner.

Silver Jubilee Day,

9th Feb. 1955.

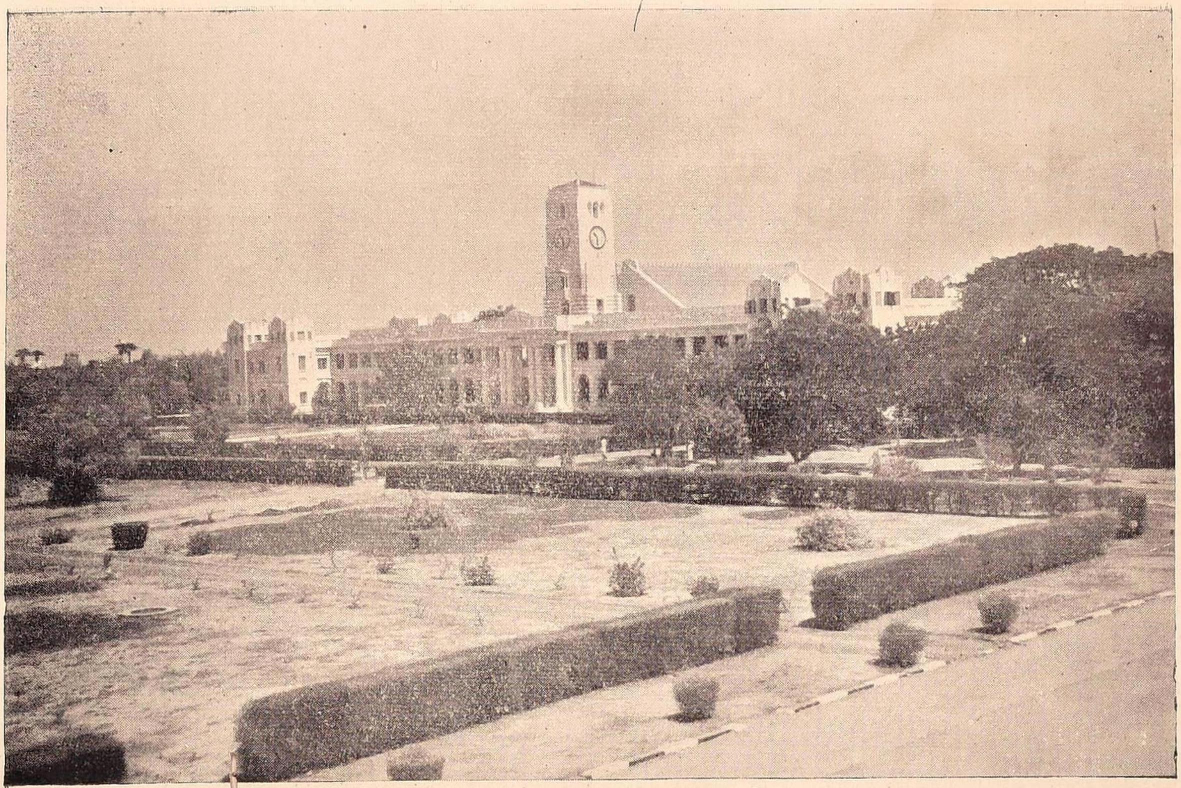
PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The Annamalai University Celebrated the Silver Jubilee of its foundation, on the 9th February 1955. The General public of South India, as well as the Academic world fully participated in its festivities.

A signification event was the Special Convication, Conferring the Degree of Doctor of Letters on the Raja Pramukh of Mysore, Rajah Sir M. A. Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad, Dr. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Sir S. E. Runganadhan, Dr. Sir A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Sri S. Somasundara Bharathiar, and Dr. Sir S. Radhakrishnan. The author offers to this distinguished galaxy of talents his respectful felicitations.

The author's gratitude is due to the University authorities for calling out a second edition of this worn; to the Archaeological Survey of India, for the use of the line blocks illustrating the Darasuram *Periyapuranam* sculptures. and best thanks to Sri S. Sriraman, Manager of the Commercial Printing and Publishing House Madras, for the excellent get up of this volume.

Twenty-fifth
Convocation Day
14th October 1955



ADMINISTRATION BUILDINGS, ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

The University's Environs,
CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL

The Annamalai University is situated near Chidambaram on a very holy site of ancient renown and modern importance. It has for ages been famous for its great temple. Traditionally it has been associated with great *bhaktas* (devotees), great *literati*, and leaders of men in philosophy and religion and saints of great renown.

The temple to Siva as Nataraja—the Lord of the Immortal Dance is the " Koyil " *par excellence.* As a path to eternal salvation, worship at the temple is considered most important in Hindu life. It rose on an ancient site, some of the inner portions being of the remotest antiquity, preserved with care and enriched by devotees for several generations.

South of Madras, 151 miles on the main line of the Southern Railway lies Chidambaram in N. Lat. 11°, 24'', E.long. 79°, 44'' between the Vellar on the North, the Bay of Bengal on the East, the Coleroon on the South and the Viranam lake on the West, the ten miles radius prescribed for the University Campus.

The City is the headquarters of the Taluk of that name in South Arcot district; and has been a municipality from 1871, with a population of 31,575*. Chidambaram covers an area of 1105 acres on an

* Census figure of 1951.

elevation of 16 feet above sea-level, "on loose alluvial soil,....land is valuable; good building and road-mending material is exceedingly scarce; and natural drainage is practically non-existent."

The Annamalai University site is to the east of the Railway station, and has been chosen for its sandy surface, the scope it gives for expansion, and the possibility therein of a peaceful atmosphere, helpful to the pursuit of culture. The Palaman* bridge to the west is the connecting link, to go into the City and visit the Nataraja temple.

Chidambaram is a pilgrim centre, next in size to Madurai and Srirangam in South India; it attracts pilgrims throughout the year from the whole of India and Ceylon. For the convenience of the pilgrims, there are 69 rest houses (where all kinds of comforts are provided), on the basis of communities, classes, and localities. Amongst them are the V. S. (வெ. ச.) Choultry in South Car Street, managed by Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad and his family, the Pallavarayappet Choultry in the eastern end of South Car Street, Odayoor, Vilagam, the Kalyana Cholapuram, the Marvadi and other Choultries. There is a P. W. D. inspection bungalow adjacent to the Railway Station for the use of officials.

There are six High Schools for boys: Pachaiyapya's High School, Ramaswami Chettiar's Town High School and its branch High School at Tiruvetkalam, Sri Arumukha Navalar High School, Ramakrishna Vidyasala and a Mission School. There is a Government

* An off-shoot of Viranam Lake, known also as Khan Saheb Canal, bridged over in 1882—now re-modelled with R.C. decking.

Secondary School for Girls, Nandanar High School for Girls, five adult schools, three for women and two for men (run by the Municipality), and 23 Elementary Schools. The Municipality maintains also eight public reading rooms.

Religious and secular education is being fostered by Tevara Patasalas like the V. S. Charities Patasala, and the Palaniappa Mudaliar Tevara Patasala. The Tamil Schools are Navalar's Saiva Prakasa Vidyasala with College classes affiliated to the Annamalai University for Oriental studies, and the Meykanda Siddhanta Vidyasala founded by Chokkalingayya of Karaikudi. The Sanskrit Patasalas are M. S. Vidyasala of Karaikudi and two others. There is also the *Tillai Tiru-muraik-kazhagam* conducting occasional religious discourses in the thousand-pillared Raja Sabha by scholars during festivals. An endowment of incalculable value by His Holiness Silasri Kasivasi Arulnandi Tambiran Swamigal of Kasi Mutt was recently instituted by the Swamin, with a capital of Rs. 16,000/-, for a daily broadcast of *Tevara Tirumurai and Tiruvachakam,* both early morning and evening to rouse people to spiritual consciousness.

The city is mainly a temple city; its length is from the North to the South, and the breadth from the East to the West; not to disturb the serene atmosphere, industrial and commercial life has found its centre in the West, the East being left for cultural and other expansion. It is towards the East that the University was started and has expanded: the site chosen by saints Manikavachakar and Umapathi Sivachariar.

Epigraphical and other records* show that Chidambaram occupied in former centuries much larger limits than now. A 12th century inscription mentions Chidambaram as *Perumbatrappuliyur* and as a Taniyur, a large self-governing local unit similar to a modern municipal corporation, and comprising not less than 23 hamlets (suburbs) within a radius of about 8 miles; as *Kotravankudi* east of the railway station, *Tiruvetkalam* known in Chola inscription as Jananathanallur, Sivapuri, Usuppur and others.

The civic amenities donated by Dr. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad and his brother to this ancient citadel of Saivism include the well-equipped High School started above 40 years ago and named after Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Chettiar; schools for Vedic and Agamic learning, the Ve-Sa Tevara Patasala, Choultries for large scale feeding, Goraksha salas, nandanavanams, the protected water supply to the town, and the "Rajah Sir Annamalai Park and Town Hall"-a civic centre with a large compound, wherein all open air public meetings are held.

And, more noteworthy still, to crown all these generous benefactions of this illustrious House, the great institution of the Annamalai University was founded—the only Tamil University in India—the first unitary, teaching and residential University of South

* A Vijayanagar inscription of A D. 1570, names the place as *Alagiya Chitrambalam* in Rajadhiraja valanadu of the province of the *Sirmai* of 'Bhuvaneka Viran Pattinam', the modern Bhuvanagiri to the north of the town. The wide extent, Chidambaram occupied in former times is also confirmed by a document of A. D. 1804 in which the boundaries of the town are mentioned as 'to the south of the Vellar *alias Tiru-manimukta-nadhi* of Vennaiyur Valutalam pattu Savadi, to the north of the bank of the Upaya punya Kaveri (Coleroon), to the east of the Viranarayana Solan Eri (Viranam Lake), and to the west of the eastern sea".

DR. RAJAH SIR ANNAMALAI CHETTIAR OF CHETTINAD AND
RANI SAHEBA OF CHETTINAD

India, with six Faculties and twenty four departments of study and over 175 members of the Teaching staff. Twenty-five years have since elapsed, and the University has fittingly celebrated its Silver Jubilee on the 9th of February, 1955.

Dr. Rajah Sir M. Annamalai Chettiar, Kt. LL.D. of Chettinad

The Founder of the University, Dr. Rajah Sir M. Annamalai Chettiar, Kt. LL.D., of Chettinad was born at Kanadukathan in the district of Ramanathapuram, on the 30th of September, 1881. He came of a community reputed for business enterprise, religious fervour and practical benevolence. He was the fourth son of his devout parent S. Rm. M. Muthiah Chettiar, respected by his community as their undisputed head. Chief among his charities are the renovating of the Temple of Sri Nataraja which cost him several lakhs of rupees, the founding of a choultry here, where pilgrims find food and shelter, and the repairs to the famous Siva shrine at Karur. His pilgrimage to Banaras, for half the distance on foot, and the construction of the Nagarathar Choultry there, on the Dasaswamedha Ghat, and endowing it richly, deserve mention.

Rajah Annamalai Chettiar had his early education at Kanadukathan and Karur. His father personally supervised his studies, and gave him a thorough grounding in the family business of banking. The Rajah was careful in his choice of agents to conduct the business of the branches of his firms abroad. System, regularity and attention to detail marked his way of doing business.

In the Rajah's nineteenth year, his father passed away; and in the partition effected by his brothers he

succeeded to a bounteous inheritance. He now managed his own property and business. With his original ideas, high business skill, and extensive tour through Europe and the United Kingdom in 1910, to obtain first hand knowledge of his firms, his concerns expanded covering Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, and South East Asia, with a net work of nearly 65 banks and branches. His hard work, unerring judgment of men, his precision, punctuality and thoroughness marked him out for a great future. Added to this, one could see in his manner and deportment, the perfection of old-world courtesy, a happy blend of the East and the West, which charmed every one he came into contact with.

By the time he was thirty, he was called to wider fields of activity. His Chairmanship of Karaikudi Union from 1910-1913 has become an example for people to follow, and marked him out as "a pattern of Civic piety". He soon found himself on the District Board and other local organizations for the good of the country. In 1916, Rao Bahadur Annamalai Chettiar was nominated to the Madras Legislative Council; and in 1921 he was elected to the Council of State at the top of the polls. The latter seat he held for fifteen years for three consecutive terms, every time he was elected at the head of the poll. His mind was now bent on Finance. He was one of the founders of the Indian Bank and served on its Directorate for a number of terms. In the same year, the Viceroy appointed him one of the Governors of the Imperial Bank of India, and he was connected with the Bank as a Director to the end of his life. From the outset, his mind was set on supplying educational and chari-

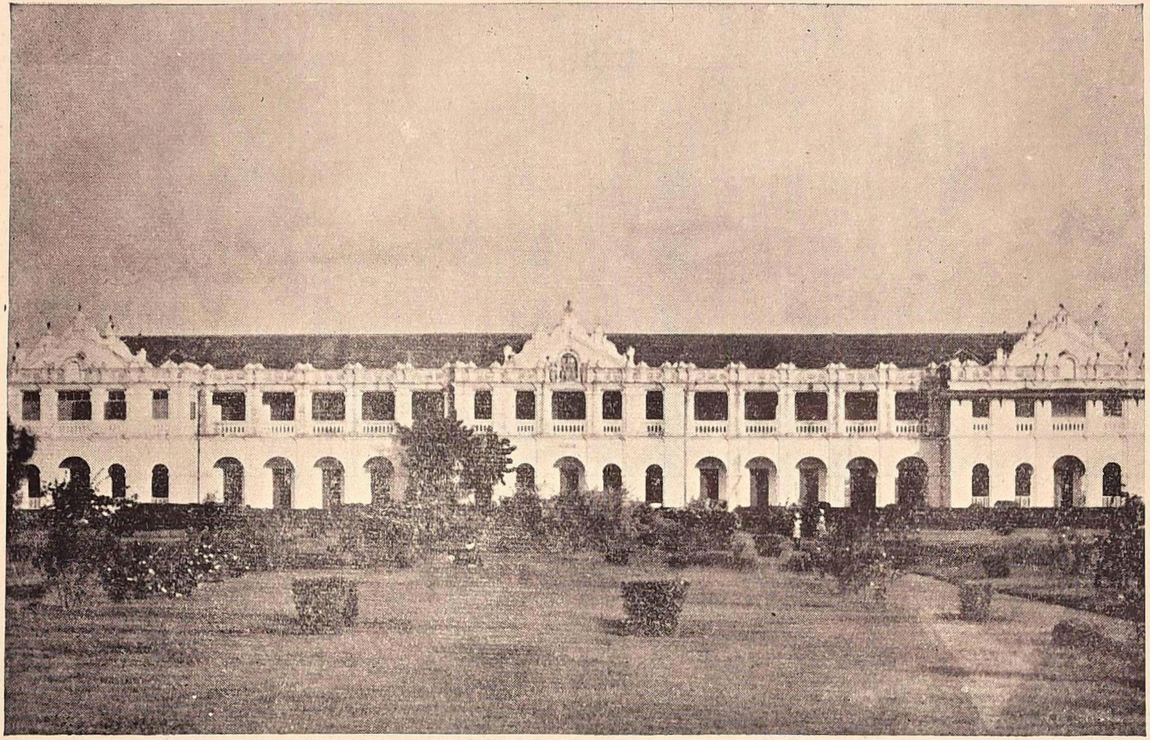
table needs, wherever they were felt. At Kanadukathan, he built and endowed a Women and Children's Hospital. In 1915, he provided a Hostel for the students of the American College at Madurai; and in 1916, he gifted away to the Madurai College, a whole block of 40 acres, which he purchased for Rs. 30,000 and on which the present College buildings stand. In 1924 he gave two lakhs of rupees for purchasing a building to accommodate the Ladies Club at Madras. This building named 'The Willingdon', is a very popular centre of social activity.

It was the death of his brother Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Chettiar (5th November, 1918), a philanthropist and prominent citizen of Chidambaram, that actually drew him to this sacred city. Its old traditions of culture, of devotees like the Samayacharyas, and of advances of learning from the days of Patanjali of old and more than all, its being the seat of Lord Nataraja, to whom his family was devoted, made him believe that here was the place where he could translate his master passion for Education into a reality.

The Rajah Saheb had come to Chidambaram to view the High School which his brother had founded and nurtured, and which it now fell to his lot to form a Trust and manage. The idea of starting a College having originated in him, he envisaged the school to "feed" the College when one is started by him; and soon, the Sri Meenakshi College was founded in 1920, affectionately named after the Rajah's mother. It was at the outset, a second grade College, temporarily located in the High School building. This later blossomed out into a first-grade Arts and Science College. A progressive educationist as the Rajah was,

he saw a vital connection between Oriental studies and the study of Arts and Science and he endowed as an adjunct to the Arts College a Sanskrit College and a Tamil College at Chidambaram with Mahamahopadyaya Dandapaniswami Dikshitar and Mahamahopadyaya V. Swaminathier as the respective Principals. Soon an Oriental Training College was established, and in 1929 a College of Music followed. Now, Annamalai Chettiar felt the urge for a University. Rao Bahadur Annamalai Chettiar was now a Dewan Bahadur; and in 1923 after the establishment of the Sri Meenakshi College, a knighthood was conferred on him.

While thinking of the choice of a site for the University to be, he remembered the temple of Tiruvetkalam, he and his brother had built in or about 1900 on an old sand hill. They had provided a road to the shrine, and given it all the amenities needed for a village shrine. He thought that he should have the College under the immediate eye of Pasupadeswara and Goddess Nallanayaki, the locality being sanctified also by the visits of the Samayacharyas, saints Appar and Gnanasambandar. With a few picked educationist friends, Annamalai Chettiar, got down from the bandy in the north-east corner of the present Meenakshi College site, and a pair of Garudas fluttered round and round to show the spot, in the same way that three centuries ago, the spot was marked for the Kedar Ghat and the Kumaraswami mutt, in Kasi, when the Nawab of Banaras and St. Kumara-Gurupara Swamigal were choosing the site. Rajah Annamalai Chettiar immediately decided to locate the University on this site. It was a sandy soil of more than 100 acres, with very sparse vegetation



THE ARTS BLOCK—SRI MINAKSHI COLLEGE

and three groves in between. Here in 1923, he gave the first building to the College, and had it raised, camping at the place himself to see the piling of brick on brick and working out the smallest details of plans, estimates and the execution. Sri Meenakshi College now moved into its own buildings. In 1926, the buildings for the Science departments were opened. The idea of a University ever present with him, he made the hostels, library, playgrounds and other amenities larger than a College required. The real expansion into a University took final shape in 1929, he having made his formal proposals to the Government in 1928.

The Annamalai University

The Annamalai University is a personal benefaction of the Rajah Saheb to the intellectual and cultural wealth of South India. He agreed with the Government of Madras to give Rs. 20 lakhs for creating the University, besides 300 acres of land, the Sri Meenakshi College, and the Sanskrit and Tamil Colleges at and near Chidambaram, their numerous buildings, their hostels, and professors' quarters worth another 20 lakhs of rupees, that he had founded and been maintaining; and now they were to form the nucleus of the permanent endowments of the University. The University Act* came into force on 1st Jan, 1929 in an atmosphere of hope and good-will. The Government came forward to give an additional Rs. 27 lakhs for endowment, with Rs. 7½ lakhs for buildings and a lakh and a half of annual recurring grant. This was later increased in 1941 to a lakh and ninety thousands of rupees by the Government of Sir Arthur Hope.

* Madras Act I of 1929 as amended by the Goverment of India (Adaptation of Indian lands) orders, 1937 and 1940 and as further amended by the Madras Act X of 1943. The Annmalai University Amendment Act 1943.

The schedule to the Act defined the boundaries of the University site as the whole revenue village of Tiruvetkalam and portions of 'Kothangudi' and Usuppur,* the place already chosen by the Rajah and developed by him, with all its modern amenities.

The University came into being in 1929, and the Senate was formally inaugurated on the 24th of March 1930. In requesting His Excellency Sir George Frederick Stanley, the Chancellor of the University, Rajah Saheb, the Pro-Chancellor made the following speech :—

"This University owes its existence to two factors which I shall, with your leave, detail here to-day. First and foremost is the hearty and enthusiastic response that the Government of Madras has been giving to endeavours of private philanthropy, and secondly, the desire of the 18 millions of Tamil-speaking people in this Presidency and abroad also to nurture a centre of learning, to give to the world the value of Tamil learning, literature and culture.

"The idea of a Tamil University is as old as the College from which this University has sprung. Educationists who had set their hearts on the scheme brought it now and then to the notice of the public. Government appointed in 1926 a Committee to examine the subject of establishing a University for the Tamil Districts. The witnesses before the Committee were in favour of a separate University for the Tamil Districts for several reasons.

* "Bounded on the north by the Nadarajapuram road commencing from the South Indian Railway level crossing situated just to the east of the Chidambaram Municipal Toll-gate, on the east and south by the Uppanar and on the west by the South Indian Railway line and lands belonging to the South Indian Railway Company Limited; and Resurvey Nos. 65 to 68, 105 to 144 of the above mentioned village of Usuppur."

" The Committee considered it desirable to have unitary teaching Universities and as many of them as the country could afford to support in a good condition. The establishment of one such University, however, has been made possible by the signal response which the Government of Madras chose to give to private effort in the year 1928."

* * * *

" The main features of the Act are (1) the provision for research ; (2) the adequate representation of the teaching element in the various authorities of the University (3) the institution of a unitary, teaching residential University with the concomitant advantages of an active social life among the teachers and the taught ; (4) the attempt to rehabilitate oriental culture by forming a special faculty of oriental studies; (5) the proper financial backing of the university by an endowment and the securing of sound financial expert advice by means of a Finance Committee for the infant stages of the University ".

" I may now take leave to mention what has been attempted and what is yet to do. In this, the very first year of its existence, the University has attempted the starting of research departments, the equipping of the Library and the provision of staff at the rate of one for every fifteen students. Its building schemes are expected to cost 24 lakhs. It is sought to improve the amenities of the place by putting on hand a drainage, a water-supply and an electric supply scheme. It is hoped that facilities for boating, and swimming and other kinds of exercise will be given in the near future."

Early in 1929 in recognition of Sir Annamalai Chettiar's unique services to the cause of education the distinction of the hereditary title of Rajah was conferred on him, and henceforth he came to be known as Rajah Sir M. Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad. This generous recognition of his noble services by the Government was welcomed by the public and the Nagarathars; and the University of Madras marked their appreciation by conferring on him the degree of Doctor of Laws.

From the start of the University, the principles outlined in the Act were sought to be faithfully carried out. A Faculty of Oriental Studies began to function as an integral part of the University. Research in Tamil and South Indian History were given special attention to. The Faculty comprised the Department of Tamil (Arts) providing instruction in courses leading to the Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts and B.A. (Hons.) in Tamil; and Tamil (Oriental) for the courses of Pulavar, Vidwan, Bachelor of Oriental Learning and Diploma in Teaching Tamil. The heads of the Tamil and Sanskrit departments guided the research of post-graduate students, as well as Research in various problems in Languages and literature. In its aim to reconstruct South Indian History, the first work to be published on the subject was *Tamil Varalaru* by Mahavidwan R. Raghava Iyengar. The Mahavidwan launched the Tamil Research department and was ably succeeded by Mahamahopadyaya Pandithamani M. Kathiresan Chettiar. The Department has to its credit a number of learned publications, including a translation into Tamil of Kautilya's *Arthaśastra*, a History of Tamil Literature in parts, and a new and

authoritative Variorum edition of *Kambaramayanam*. The Union Government in appreciation of this last, has since granted Rs. 20,000 to go ahead this great work. A Study of the Twelve *Tirumurais* is also in preparation. The Government of India in recognition of these valuable works has made a grant of Rs. 3 lakhs towards the creation of a Chair in Tamil; and the local Government Rs. one lakh towards a "Tamil Research Institute"*.

The next object of devotion in the Rajah's mind was the fostering of Tamil Music. On the 11th May, 1929 the Rajah started the Rajah Annamalai Music College for the training of musicians. In 1932, it was handed over to the University, and housed in an edifice of its own. The building was unique in that it was so planned that the music of one class did not disturb the other classes. The open spaces in between classes served to distribute the sound upward immediately, and reversible doors served to keep the music of each class to itself.

The object of the College was to revive Tamil Music, to set high standards and to propagate music in the old Gurukula style. The largest class was for Vocal music, and it satisfied the demands of a variety of talents. To set standards for the vocalist, instruction in *Vina* was made compulsory, and *mridangam* was to form part of every performance: vocal and instrumental. *Tevaram* as representative of the original Tamil system of Music in South Indian temples was also open to all students to learn. Instrumental music was also provided, the chosen instruments being Vina, Violin and Mridangam. A four year course was planned and followed from the outset.

After the first five years, an attempt at exploring the field of music for old and rare gems of

* Since Completed and opened on 26th Dec'r 1955 by Dr Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of India.

Tamil songs and compositions of new ones, and the publication of the songs, according to a scale of notation was begun. At a number of conferences of the musical talents of the country, the musical compositions were sung and a selection was made with a view to publication. So far, nineteen volumes have been brought out by the University, besides, a volume *Bharata Sangraham* on Bharatha Natya. The Musical compositions consist of 1254 songs, those that still remain with notations ready for the Press number 436 and another 661 for which notations have still to be given. The Rajah made a gracious endowment of Rs. 40,000/- for encouraging and popularising Tamil Songs, and it shows today an investment of Rs. 23,100/- still remaining to be utilised.

In 1935, with the impending separation of Burma, questions affecting the Nagarathars in that province asssumed great importance. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar led a delegation to meet the Secretary of State for India in England, to discuss the Indo-Burma Immigration Agreement. The delegation proved of immense benefit to both, India and Burma, and the claims of Indians were recognised and adequate safeguard provided in the Government of Burma Act.

While in England, the Rajah visited the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In Oxford, he met the Master of Balliol who showed him over the University. He discussed problems of University administration with, it was said. 'Considerable insight.' He also visited the several slum areas as he was keenly interested in the housing conditions of the poor. His visits were always serious and purpose-

THE MUSIC COLLEGE

ful as "like a Chiel, takin notes," actually turning all his experiences to practical account later.

From England, the Rajah crossed over to America on a short visit, and the Rani Saheba Lady Annamalai Chettiar accompanied him, giving the lead to the ladies of her community to follow her example. Before returning to India, the Rajah visited Belgium, France and Germany; and in Paris, he met the Minister for Colonies, and remedied the hardships of Indian emigrants to Indo- China.

On April 16, 1940, the Rajah Saheb announced at the Convocation of the Annamalai University a donation of Rs. 10,000/- for the starting of the Tamil Isai movement. This was soon followed by a Tamil Isai Conference in August 1941, at Annamalainagar under the patronage of the Rajah Saheb. He desired torevolutionise music concerts in Tamilnad by giving a dominating place to Tamil songs. In this pious work, his collaborator was his distinguished friend, Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chettiar. These two leaders drew up plans to start a Tamil Isai Sangam, and it was inaugurated in 1943.

The Tamil Isai Movement

The first Tamil Music Festival was celebrated from December 23, 1943 to January 3, 1944 at Madras. Never before had such a festival been celebrated in any part of our country. People in Tamilnad rallied round the Tamil Isai movement irrespective of political, communal, social, and economic differences. Thousands of people inspired by the high ideals of the Rajah and the lofty aims of the Sangam came forward to volunteer their services in the cause of Tamil Isai. Inaugurating the First Tamil Isai Festival, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar set forth the

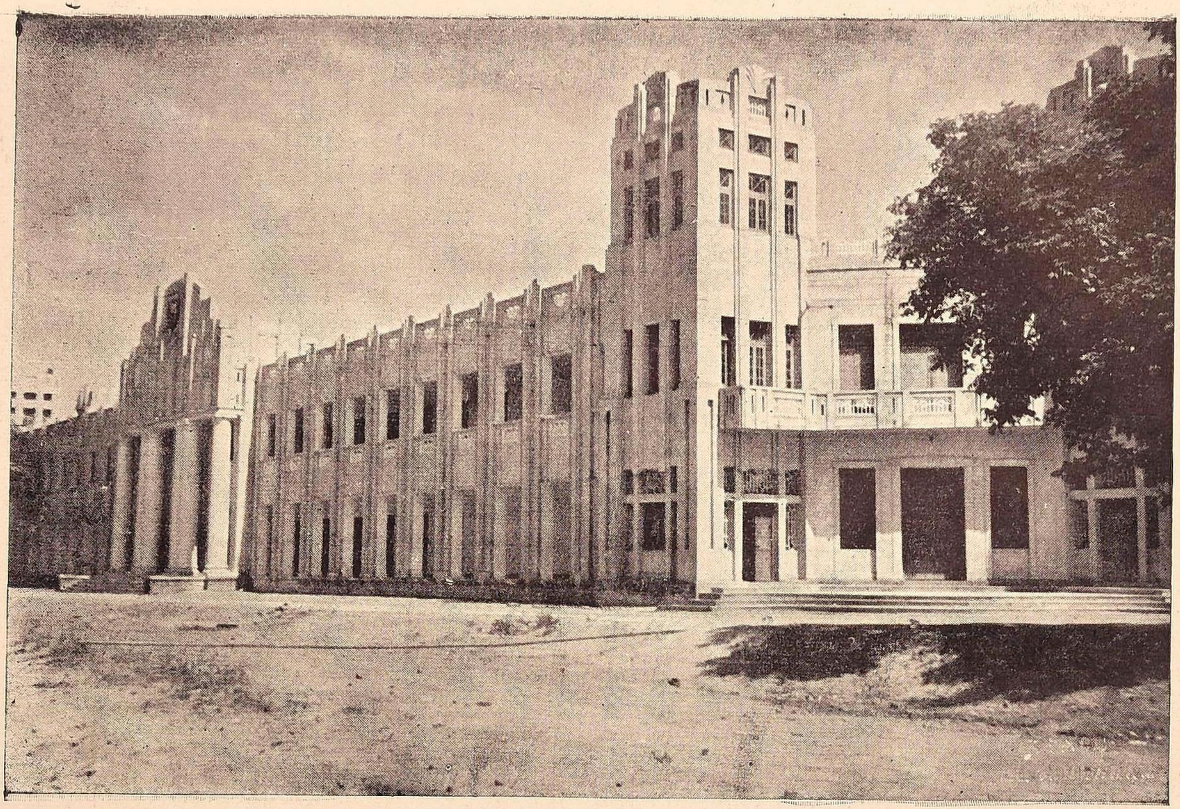
aims of the Tamil Isai movement in the following terms :

"In all music concerts of Tamil Nad the rendering of Tamil musical composition should get priority. The first and the last songs in the concert should invariably be Tamil Songs. Further, most of the songs of the concerts should be Tamil songs. But there should be no objection to singing a few songs in other languages between Tamil songs. There is no hatred towards the songs composed in other languages. The chief aim in laying down such conditions is to afford maximum enjoyment to the Tamil public in music concerts. The concerts in Tamil Nad should satisfy the needs of Tamilians first."

The Tamil Isai Sangam, Madras, constituted under such good auspices has been another source of strength to the movement, and to the enrichment of the stock of musical literature. The Tamil country now really came into its own in the matter of Tamil poetic compositions. It is a real renaissance in this field of Art. All this work has been the fruit of the effort begun under the auspices of the University, blessed with the foresight of the Founder, and aided by the devotion of the great musicians of the land who willingly co-operated in the work of resuscitating Tamil Music.

Tiruppanandal Endowments

One of the earliest endowments to the University was that to foster the growth of the science of Tamil music in the *Tevara Tirumurai* and publish works on Tamil Literature and Grammar. This was the Raja Raja Abhaya Kulasekhara Chola Maharaja Memorial Endowment of 118.75 acres of deltaic land by His Holiness Silasri Swaminatha Tambiran Swamigal Avergal. This was followed up,



THE ENGINEERING COLLEGE

by further endowments, nearly twenty in number for specific purposes of reviving oriental learning in the full details of the Old Schools of Music and Literature, by himself and his successor in the *Pitam*, His Holiness Silasri Arulnandi Tambiran Swamigal Avl. The objects of these endowments were the revival of Tamil studies, re-discovery of Tamil Music according to the donor, Tamil should come into its own, both as a vehicle for Music, and as an important subject of proper study of the highest standard.

University Courses of Studies

The University comprises at present the Faculties of Arts, Science, Oriental Studies, Education, Engineering and Technology and Fine Arts. Provision has been made for instruction up to the Honours standard in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, Philosophy, History, Economics, English, Sanskrit and Tamil.

In the study of Economics, the University gave a rapid lead with many contributions to its problems as Factory Labour in India, Road and Rail Transport, The Indian Trade, The Problem of Rural credit in the Madras Presidency, and the like—publications sponsored by the then head of the department. A Text Book on Economics in Tamil is since followed by another volume, in Press. The University is now engaged in Research schemes as Survey of small scale Industries in Salem, a Pilot Survey of influences of Mettur project on cultivation in Tanjore District the union and State Governments having sanctioned an amount Rs. 4500/- for the purpose.

In July 1945, Courses in Engineering and Technology were instituted in the University, on an expansive site of about 44 acres, acquired east of the railway line. The Government of Madras, came forward with

a generous grant of Rs. 2.29 lakhs recurring and Rs. 10.66 lakhs non-recurring for buildings and equipments. An additional generous benefaction for these Technological studies came in the shape of Rs. Five lakhs and one, from Dr. RM. Alagappa Chettiar. It was a discerning and lavish gift for an imperative need of the hour. The authorities of the University in grateful appreciation of his generosity conferred on him *honoris causa* the title of Doctor of Laws of the Annamalai University, and Life Membership of the Senate. 'Dr. RM. Alagappa Chettiar Technology Block' is a visible testimony to this benefaction. The Department of Technology conducts a four year course in Chemical Engineering and Chemical Technology. From 1954 another course in Ore-Dressing for B.Sc. Geology students has been instituted. The Department has well equipped Chemical Engineering and other laboratories and also required facilities for conducting higher research in Chemical Engineering and Chemical Technology subjects. The starting of specialised Technical courses is under consideration, the Government having sanctioned Rs. 2 lakhs, 11,500 for buildings and another Rs. 2 lakhs for equipments during the year.

The Engineering Workshop is an adjunct to the College of Engineering. It is well equipped to provide practical instruction and training in carpentry, fitting, machining, smithy and moulding to the B. E. Degree students.

In 1951, the Agricultural Department was introduced with Agriculture as a subject of study under the optional part of the B. Sc. courses, and in the next year, extended to the Intermediate course, the Government having sanctioned Rs. 30,000 for equipments. In this year, Dr. R. K. Shanmukham Chettiar, the Vice-Chancellor rightly held that this was vital and nation building branch of study, and ought not to be

theoretical and academic, but should be a practical pursuit, emphasis should be on field-work in touch with the peasantry around and their problems and needs. Accordingly, a demonstration farm of 50 acres was started for immediate action, also another 150 acres for an extensive scheme of agricultural research. Farmers from the adjoining villages were selected and given compact economic holdings, which they cultivated with seed, stock and capital, supplied by the University and according to the latest scientific methods taught by the Department of Agriculture. To complete the training, Lectures and Demonstrations with Cine-films have been organised for the farmers in an University Extension Scheme for which the Government had granted Rs. 10,000 at the outset. Students doing manual work in the fields as part of their practical training, have thus gratifyingly brought about a feeling of community of life and labour between themselves and the peasant population around them.

The University in the rapid strides of its growth, has been piloted by a successive line of able Vice-Chancellors chosen for their scholarship and administrative skill by the Founder with great wisdom and foresight : Sir Samuel E. Runganathan, an eminent professor was its first Vice-Chancellor from 1929-35 ; and successively Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, an ambassador of Peace from 1935–40 ; Sir Kurma V. Reddi, an able administrator from 1940–42 ; Mr. M Ruthnaswami, a ripe scholar and student of Politics from 1942–48 ; Dr. S. G. Manavalaramanujam, an energetic educationist and Principal from 1948–1951 ; Dr. R. K. Shanmukham Chettiar, a rate Financial expert of Imperial fame from 1951–53.

With Dr. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, an Educationist Politician of International repute began another stride for a wider horizon in the field of Literature and Arts. A Faculty of Fine Arts, courses in Education, Geology, Social studies and a beginning

of Universities Co-operation and Exchange of Professors were inaugurated under his watchful and benevolent care. The course in Education began with a Teachers' College, opened in June 1953; to meet the growing need for teachers trained in modern methods of teaching and learning. It bids fair to become a vigorous centre of teacher-training. Realising the importance of this branch of study, the State Government made a grant Rs. 75,000/- to build a Teachers' Training College. A post-graduate course in Teaching, leading to the Degree of Master of Education has since been instituted. The Training College building is since completed and opened.

The fostering care of the destinies of the University is now in the able hands of Lt. Col. Dewan Bahadur T. M. Narayanaswami Pillai, M.A., B.L; M.L.C., a ripe administrator, keen on bringing about an efficient and progressive growth of University ideals.

The Department of Geology was opened in June 1953 under the Faculty of Science. The good collections of material relating to the Geology of South India and the equipment that was already available in the University for Engineering Geology constituted the nucleus for the formation of the new department. The State Government now gave a non-recurring grant of Rs. 75,000/- and a recurring grant of Rs. 10,000/- per annum. In view of the rapid industrialisation of the country and the Neiveli Lignite project, that has been started in the District, the University has decided to offer not only the B.Sc. course of study but also the B.Sc. Hons. and M.Sc. courses of studies in Geology. With the initial equipment grant of Rs. 20,000/- supplemented by the Government grant in the year 1953–54, the department is very well equipped for the courses intended. A course of study in principles of Ore Dressing and Assaying with

* Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chettiar Building opened on 26–12–1955 by Dr. Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of India.

Lt. Col. T. M. Narayanaswamy Pillai, M.A., B.L., M.L.C.
Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University

training in surveying has also been started by the Chemical Engineering Department, and all Geology students are offered the course. As such, this will be the first University in South India to follow the present day trend to combine the practical aspects of Geology with merely theoretical studies.

The Union Government gave a grant of Rs. 2 lakhs, in aid of post-graduate studies and research in Chemistry, Botany and Zoology. There came also a fresh grant of Rs 40,000/- for the promotion of post-graduate and research work in Botany, while the council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi gave a sum of Rs. 3,700/- for implementing a scheme of piscicultural research at the Zoological laboratory of the University. A further welcome grant is Rs. 3.23 lakhs for a building to house the Chemistry and Geology Departments.

Towards the Jubilee, a policy of expansion was envisaged. When the University framed a five-year plan and formulated its proposals, it received from the Central Government a sum of Rs. 85,000/- for the development of research in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Zoology. An additional recurring grant of Rs. 9,000 has made it possible to institute a research professorship in Chemistry and research assistants in Zoology.

The department of Zoology has also been enabled to extend its activities and implement one of its cherished plans—a marine Biological station at Portonovo. The Union Government granted a sum of Rs. 20,000/- and the State Government provided Rs. 10,000/- for equipment. As for a building, it was already there in the shape of a travellers' bungalow, which had for some years been virtully in the possession of the department. Towards the end of 1953, the Government of Madras was pleased to make over the Travellers' bungalow to the University as a

gift in appreciation of its work, and transfer along with the building, some 113 acres of adjoining land. Now, a bigger building has to be constructed to house all the apparatus and to implement the ambitious programme of the department. It has undertaken a faunistic and a hydrographical survey of the Vellar river and its estuary, and has already sent in a preliminary report. The grant of Rs. 1.35 lakhs recently announced by the State Government will help to complete the equipment of the Biological station. It is, now the first of its kind in India, and it will soon grow into an ideal Estuarine research station, for fundamental work in Zoology. [Vide past Chapter for a Note on the Station]

For the promotion of Social Studies, the Government of Madras made an initial grant of Rs. 10,000 and another amount for purchase of library books The work of the Department involves the colloboration of the staff of three other departments : Agriculture, Education and Economics ; also, in the future, the Community Project department of the Government of Madras.

At the commencement of the academic year 1954–55, the department of Statistics was opened, and the necessary equipment was acquired. At present Statistics is offered as one of the optional subjects for the B.Sc. courses.

Another welcome course was one of a Post Intermediate Study, covering a period of one year, designed to improve the general knowledge of students and to bring up the standard of knowledge and efficiency in general. It is intended "to benefit the student to get a mental training and equipment that is generally required to make him an educated person, with necessary culture and balance of judgment".

In 1949, the University received permission to raise two National cadet corps units, an Infantry Company with 5 N.C.C. officers and 154 codets, and a Signal Section with 2 N.C.C. officers and 60 cadets, and the Annamalai Indep. Coy. and 5 Madras Sig. Sec. N.C.C. were inaugurated by the then Vice-Chancellor Dr. S. G. Manavalaramanujam. The officers chosen from among the teaching staff of the university were trained at the regular Army training centres. With the Cadets then recruited training commenced from the academic year 1949-50.

In the years following, the N.C.C. training thus inaugurated has become a regular feature university studies; and, it is wished for that every alumni of the university receivers the training, the Ministries of Education and Defence giving the necessary facilities and aid to the University.

The University Publications

The University has started its educational and research publications even as early as 1931, Prof. P. T. Srinivasa Ayyangar beginning an Indian History Series. They number 17. Of the other Departments, Economics has 14, Philosophy 7, Mathematics 3, Physics 10, Chemistry 3, Botany 2, Tamil Literature 19, Tamil Isai inclusive of Text-Books 25, Sanskrit Literature 12 and Tiruppanandal Endowment publications 8. They may be classed with the highest production in their respective subjects. The idea of writing scientific text books in the Tamil language, (so as to inculcate them through a medium of Tamil instruction,) has been productive of a series of very valuable volumes in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Botany, History and Economics. The publications bid fair for further valued contributions to research in every department of the University.

Journal of the Annamalai University started in 1932 is a valued record of research carried on by the

members of the University Staff; and the *University Magazine* bears contributions from the *alumni* of the University. Both are esteemed as having a high place in journalistic literature.

The University Hostels

Under the Annamalai University Act, residence in the Hostel is compulsory for all students not residing with their parents or guardians. Every student of the University is required as a condition of admission to an examination of the University to have resided in the University (either in the Hostels or in approved lodgings) for not less than 80 percent of the number of days in a term in each academic year.

The Hostels comprise three main units—the Arts and Science Hostels, the Engineering and Technology Hostels and the Women Students' Hostel. The total number of Students in the University is 2006, and 1183 of them reside in the above hostels. Rupees. one lakh graciously announced as a gift by His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore as he delivered the Convocation address in 1942, was utilised in building the Travancore Engineering College Hostel, and it bears the name of His Highness and Her Highness, the Maharani. Generous intentions never come single. And, further more, the Union Government now came forward with a grant of Rs. 7 lakhs towards capital expenditure on the college, and another Rs. 4 lakhs as a long term loan free of interest for building more hostels for the Engineering students. Rani Seethai Achee Hostel opened by Sri Kamaraja Nadar, the Chief Minister of Madras, on the Silver Jubilee Celebration Day, is this new Hostel for the Engineering and Technology Students. It is large and spacious, with a magnificent frontage and well provided with all modern amenities. The Women Student's Hostel opened in 1936, with its own garden and playground is a fine building in a modern style of architecture.

The Rajah Saheb, even at the starting of the University, provided as his gift, a Ladies Club—a thing of beauty—for the use of the Ladies in the University campus. The Club possesses play grounds and provision for nearly all types of indoor and outdoor games. During off hours, a Nursery School for Children in the Campus is being conducted here under the auspices of the Staff Club.

The investments of Endowments in the several funds of the University amount to nearly Rs. 99 lakhs, assuring the march of its progress for all time.

The University Library

The magnificent Library of the University has from its inception received careful thought, and is housed in a palatial building costing about Rs. 6 lakhs; and with ever increasing additions, it now numbers about a lakh of volumes. The Union Government has since sanctioned Rs. 60,000-for books in the Science and Arts departments, and an additinal Rs. 9 lakhs for a more commodious library to meet the growing needs of the University.

The University Campus

The University Campus cover an area of 572 acres,* 125 of which are used for its extensive play-grounds, huge blocks of buildings, laboratories and hostels. All the amenities of a modern city have been provided in the shape of a water-supply system, an electric-lighting system, tarred and mecadamised roads, a Post and Telegraph Office, a Hospital, a Police Station, Co-operative Stores, Banks, Restaurants and two well equipped Guest Houses. It is a modern city grown out of a village Nattham—bidding fair to become a unique Civic centre even as Mettur, Golden Rock and Courtallum. Its beautiful paths and avenues facilitate the purposeful use of the

* The Government has since sanctioned Rs. 30,000 for construction of a Swimming Pool, Rs. 14,000 for an Open Air Theatre, and Rs. 1000/- for purchase of Sports equipments.

ardent student in his scholarly pursuits. The marvellous growth of Annamalainagar under the magic hand of its Founder is well described by the poet, Mahavidwan R. Raghava Iyengar:

“ கார் வளர்ந்ததுன் கையிலே பல கலை வளர்ந்ததுன் கொடையிலே
பார் வளர்ந்ததுன் அறனிலேநல் பாவளந்ததுன் பெயரிலே
சீர் வளர்ந்ததுன் செயலிலேமலர்த் திருவளர்ந்ததுன் மனையிலே
ஊர் வளர்ந்ததுன் அரசிலே பெரிதுயரண்ணுமலை மகிபனே ”

Dr. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar has been living through the University ever since he inaugurated it in 1929. On the 28th September, 1941 the country fittingly joined in the *Shastiabdapurti* celebrations of the Rajah Saheb on his 61st birthday, and wished him many many years of fruitful service. The University was *en-fete* and celebrated the occasion with rejoicing and testified its gratitude to the Founder by publishing a Volume of Messages and appreciative articles to commemorate the occasion. The Rt. Hon'ble Mr. M. R. Jayakar came down specially from Bombay to preside at the festivites which were organised by the Vice-Chancellor Sir Kurma V. Reddi. The Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, though not in the best of health was present on the occasion.

The Rajah even after his sixtieth year, did not rest from toil, and believed that ‘ so long as life lasted something of nobler note may yet be done.’ He had lived a full life, “ striving, saving and serving” ; and had made in this country and abroad, deep and abiding friendships. He had a well stored mind, and was an enjoyable talker. His hospitality was princely, and the courtesy he showed to the rich as well the lowest will ever be cherished by one and all.

On 25th March, 1944, Rajah Saheb made his simple declaration of his maxims in life, and in these he shows how he places Religion first, the Annamalai University next, and Tamil Music• next in his daily thoughts and he ever strove to serve and enlighten the life of all around him.

RAJAH
SIR ANNAMALAI CHETTIAR.
OF CHETTINAD.

SAVE & STRIVE SERVE
CHETTINAD

THE PALACE
CHETTINAD

உ

25. 3. 19

சிவமயம்

செந்தமிழ்ப் பெருமக்
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[illegible] தமிழ்நா
[illegible]
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என் வாழ்க்கையின்
கொள்கை.

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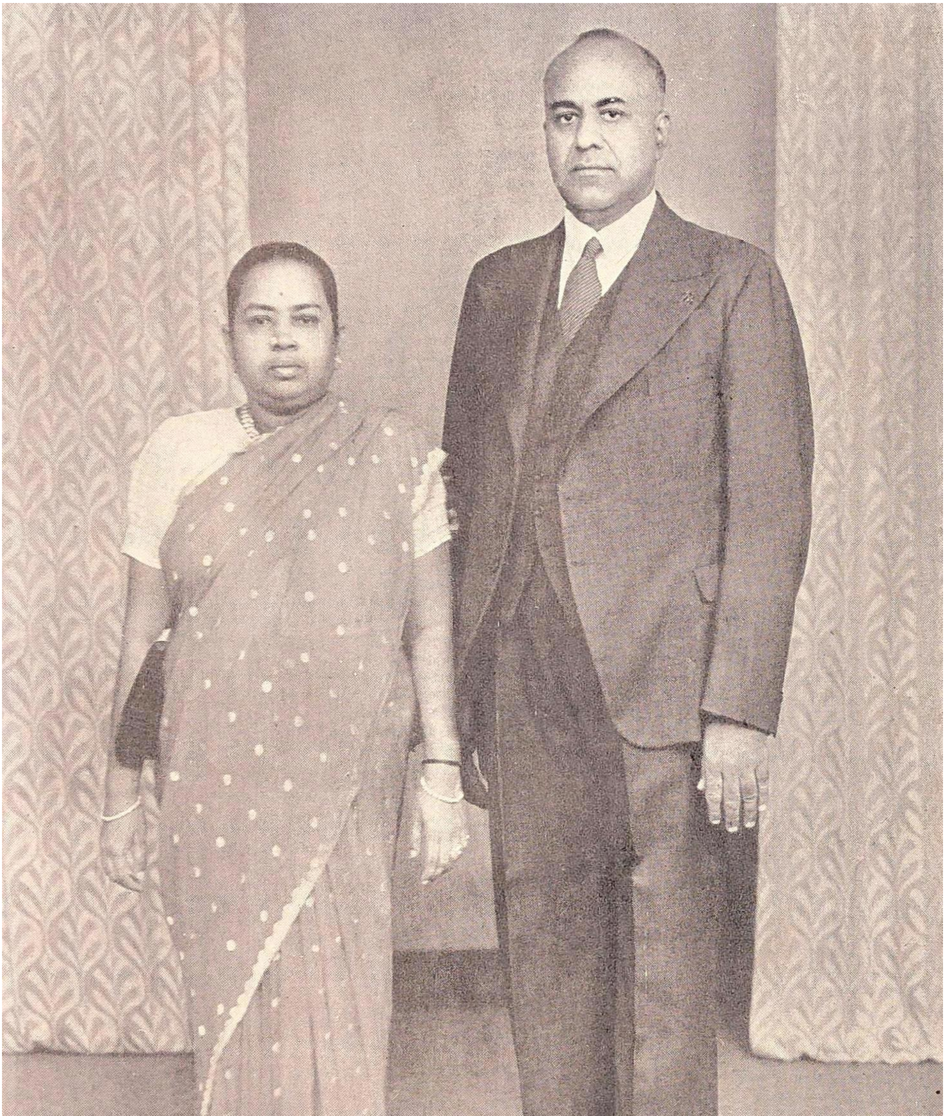
Ripe in years and in graciousness, the Rajah Saheb's home life was blessed. Rani Annamalai Chettiar, his *Dharmapatni* was a gracious lady known for her piety and liberality. They have three sons and four daughters. The sons are Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar who has succeeded to the title and the family dignities, Sri R. Ramanathan Chettiar, Sheriff of Madras in 1950 and its Mayor in 1950-51 and a Director of the Reserve Bank of India, and Sri M. A. Chidambaram Chettiar, the present Mayor of Madras, President of the South India Chamber of Commerce for a number of terms and a keen sportsman : they all carry on the noble family traditions of beneficent activity.

Early in the year 1947, the Rajah Saheb's health began to decline, he was taken ill, and on 15th of June, 1948 was gathered to his fathers and attained the *Kunjithapadham* of Lord Sri Nataraja. The loss was mourned country wide and overseas ; and on every one's lips were the words "he was a benefactor of mankind, and when comes such another ?" He was deeply mourned by his devoted children, the members of the family, the community of Nagarathars, every one of the members of the University and the world at large.

"My heart and soul" he once wrote to a friend "are in Annamalainagar. It's life is my breath". He had lived intensively for the University, he still lives in it ; and as a poet expressed of him, "His soul is embodied in this colossal creation, His heart pulsates in the life of this grand monument. His blood runs through the veins of its beauty."

The University as it stands today is the result of the Rajah Saheb's thought and labours these thirty



RAJAH SIR MUTHIAH CHETTIAR OF CHETTINAD AND RANI OF CHETTINAD

years of his life-time, and a worthy legacy for posterity to use, to cherish and to enlarge.

The illustrious father's mantle of Pro-Chancellorship of the University now fell on his worthy son and successor Rajah Sir M. A. Muthiah Chettiar, Kt., B.A., M.L.A. of Chettinad. The Rajah Saheb is ever mindful of his great charge and is constantly endeavouring to further the growth of this great institution.

Rajah Sir M. A. Muthiah Chettiar, Kt ,

The Rajah, like his great parent, has taken for his mission in life to foster Tamil language and Tamil Isai, and promote the well being of Tamilians wherever they may be. In him, the Tamil Isai movement has after its noble founder, its main spring of action. It is gaining ground everyday with encouragement of Fine Arts, of music and drama and dance, its School of advanced Tamil music, and Conferences year after year since 1949, to foster Tamil musical compositions and research in *Tevaram*, *Tiruppugazh* and *Prabandha pans* (*ragas*). In 1953, the magnificent edifice, *the Rajah Annamalai Manram* at a cost of nearly Rs. 10 lakhs came up as a worthy symbol of his untiring zeal and generosity to give the movement and the Sangam a worthy habitation. It is an outstanding Temple of Art.

Temples have been the fountain heads of education, art and culture in India throughout her history; and the *Rajah Annamalai Manram* for the Tamil Isai Sangam has a true Dravidian expression. Its outlook is imposing, and appearance resplendent with its architectural beauty and grandeur of oriental style. It faces the East, securing the best aspect for light

and ventilation. It has besides all the components required for a modern Theatre and Music Hall, special attention paid to ensure perfect acoustic qualities; as it is but appropriate that a building designed to house an institution to honour a master-thinker and philanthropist—the late Rajah Saheb, should reflect his munificence and abiding interest in traditional art, also the zeal and enthusiasm of South India's elder statesman and patron of Art, his esteemed friend, Dr. Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chettiar.

Dr. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad, had indisputably gained the distinction as the father and originator of the Tamil Isai movement, and the *Rajah Annamalai Manram* is a fitting tribute and memorial to him, bespeaking the warmth of affection and filial duty of Rajah Sir M. A. Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad and his able and versatile brothers Sri R. Ramanathan Chettiar, and Sri M. A. Chidambaram Chettiar, whose endeavours find fields of newer and newer beneficent philanthropy.

Rajah Sir M. A. Muthiah Chettiar, Kt., was born in August, 1905. Graduating from the Presidency College with History and Economics in 1924, he has his impress felt in every institution of which he has been a member. In the National Defence Council during the World War II he was a tower of strength to the Council with his watchful advice and timely help. His inherent love to further Education and progressive philanthropy has affiliated him to the Pachaiyappa Trust Board ever since 1928. Elected to the Madras Legislative Council-1930 to 1936, he bore with distinction the portfolios of Education and Public Health as a member of the Government. He also held the Pro-Chancellorship of the Madras University from 1936–37.

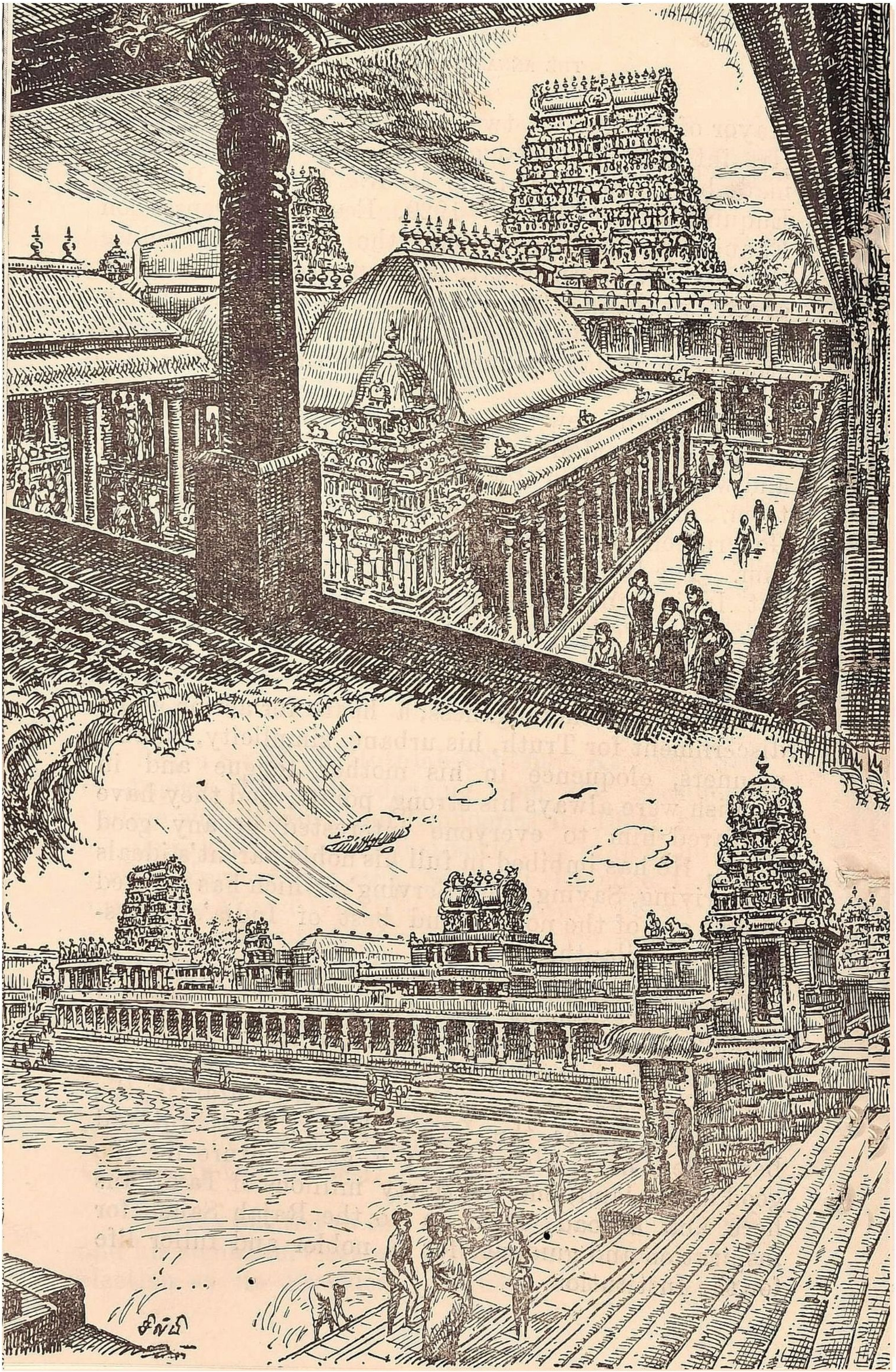
He was elected to the City Corporation in 1929, and his signal services are evident from his unanimous election as its President in 1932, and as the first

Mayor of Madras for two successive terms 1933-1934. His intimate knowledge of Finance and Commerce made him a member of the Madras Province Banking Enquiry Committee in 1929, Economic Depression Enquiry Committee in 1931, the Madras Franchise Committee the same year, the Southern India Chamber of Commerce in 1934-35, a Director of the Indian Bank, of the Imperial Bank of India, and of several other commercial and business concerns in India-

Under the new Constitution, the Rajah Saheb was elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1937, and was a Minister for Local Self-Government for a term. He continues to hold the seat. In 1941, the Government in recognition of his services, knighted him. The Rajah Saheb has widely travelled throughout India and Burma, and the Corporation of Calcutta gave him a Civic Reception when he visited that great city.

A sense of thoroughness, a heart for action and a discernment for Truth, his urbane simplicity, affable manners, eloquence in his mother tongue and in English were always his strong points, and they have endeared him to everyone interested in any good cause, He has imbibed in full his noble parent's ideals of 'Striving, Saving and Serving', which has marked him as one of the noblest and best of India's Statesmen and philanthropists.

A Prince among men, and a born leader and administrator, the future growth and prosperity of the University's are ever before his mind's eye. Prompted and blessed by the unseen hand of Lord Nataraja, the University under the Rajah Saheb's watchful and benevolent care, is assured of a great future for the good of the land, and the thirty millions of Tamilians here and abroad. look up to the Rajah Saheb for inspiration and guidance for a nobler and fuller life for the Institution.



The Temple of Nataraja

The Lord of the Cosmic Dance.

The Origin and Development

Chidambaram is variously called (1) Tillai, as once the whole site was a forest of *Tillai* (*Excoecaria agallocha*) shrubs, and on which was found the *swayambu Sivalinga*, the earliest object of worship of this great shrine; (2) *Puliyur* or *Vyaghrapura* or *Agrahara*, named, after Vyaghrapada (the tiger-footed), a progenitor of the temple, (3) *Perumbarrap-puliyur*—the place which induces in people supreme attachment to the Lord and frees them from their worldly ties. With the advent of Lord Nataraja, the place was (4) *Chit-ambalam* or *Cirrambalam* (சிற்றம்பலம்) meaning the Dabhra-Sabha—the place of the Lord of the Cosmic dance, and of the ethereal linga: the *Gnana-akasa*; (5) *Pundarikapuram*—as the city is conceived of as the lotus shaped heart—'*Hrdhya-Kamalam*' of the Virat-purusha. * (6) When the

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*"The idea of the human body and the heart being regarded as the Temple of God had its very genesis in the oldest Upanishads. One of the names of Chidambaram was *Pundarikapuram*. This is only one out of a number of other names, all derived from the Upanishads. The following stanza from Saint Umapathi Sivacharya's *Koyirpuranam*, sums up all the various names of this temple and this verse only follows a corresponding verse in *Suta Samhita*.

அத்தன் பரதத் துவனித் தநடத்
தமரும் பொதுவின் பெயர் மன்றமலஞ்
சத்தும் பரிரண் மயகோ சமகந்
தனிபுண் டரிகங் குவைகண் சகனஞ்
சுத்தம் பரமற் புதமெய்ப் பதமச்
சுழுனு வழிஞா னசுகோ தயநற்
சித்தம் பரமுத் திபரப் பிரமந்
திகழுஞ் சபைசத் திசிவா லயமே.

—கோயிற்புராணம்.

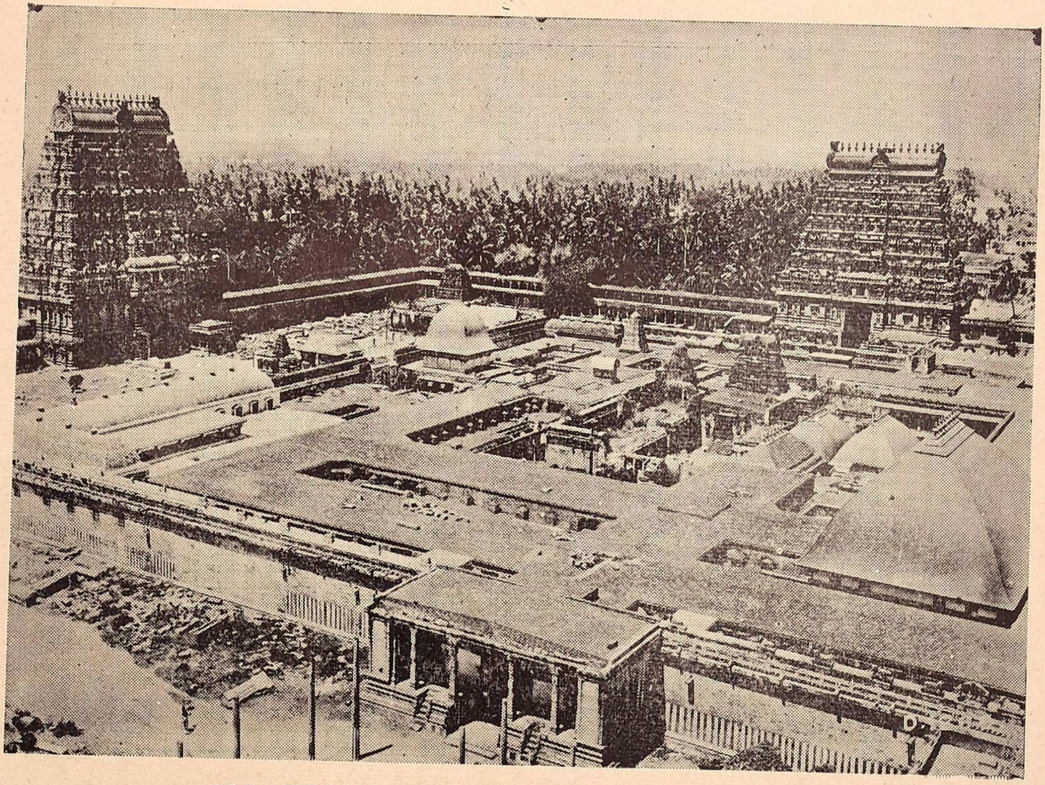
Chit-sabha came to be canopied with gold, the place came to be called *Hema sabha* or *Ponnambalam ;* and after the recovery of the Tiruppadigams of the Samayacharyas, Chidambaram came to be (7) the "*Koyil*"—the House of God, and mentioned as such and celebrated in song of the Saiva hymnists.

The great temple is located almost at the centre of the city, and covers an area of about 40 acres.

The various names are *Sat, Param, Nityam, Hiranmaya Kosam, Mahat, Viviktam, Pundarikam, Guha, Gaganam, Pari-suddam, Atpudam, Satyaspadam, Gnanasukam, Parama vyomam* (Chidambaram) *Parabrahmam, Sabha, Sakti, Paramalaya* (Sivalaya). The word *Sat* occurs in the 1st mantra, in the 1st Kanda of 6th Pratipathaka of Chandogya. The word *Param*, in 7th mantra of 3rd Chapter of Swetaswatara ; the word *Hiranmaya-kosam* in 6th mantra of 2nd Mundaka, 2nd Kanda of the same; the word *Mahat*, in Briharanyaka, 12th mantra, 4th Brahmana of 4th chapter ; the word *Viviktam* (தனி—sole) in 9th Mantra of Kaivalyopanishad ; the word *Pundarikam* in Kaivalya, 11th mantra and in Chadogya, 1st and 2nd mantras in 1st Kanda, 8th Pratipathaka ; and in 7th mantra of 10th Chapter of Mahanaraya-nopanishad ; the word *Guha* in Taitriyaka 1st Anuvaka of Brahmananda Valli ; the word *Gaganam* in 7th mantra of chapter 2, Mahanarayana ; *Suddam* in Brahad 8th mantra, 14 Brahmana 7th chapter ; *Atpudam* in 7th mantra of 2nd chapter of Maha, narayana, and in Kaivalyam, 23rd mantra, *Satyaspudam* in Kena-8th mantra 4th Kanda ; *Gnanasukam* in Anandavalli of Taitriyaka ; *Paramavyoma* (Chidambara) in several places in the same Upanishads ; *Sabha* in Chandogya, 7, 14 ; *Satyam* in Swetaswastara, 8th Mantra, 6th chapter : *Paramalayam* (Sivalaya) in Maitrayanopanishad, 27 mantra. 6th Pratipathaka. The last word Paramalaya or Sivalaya is the same as the Tamil 'கோயில்' and is very important and its occurrence in the last named Upanishad, which is reputedly a very old Upanishad, in the following lines in Maitran Upanishad :

"*Hridyakasamayam Kosam Anantham Paramalayam*"

—"Light of Truth or Siddhanta Deepika" I., p. 181.



CHIDAMBARAM TEMPLE—an aerial view

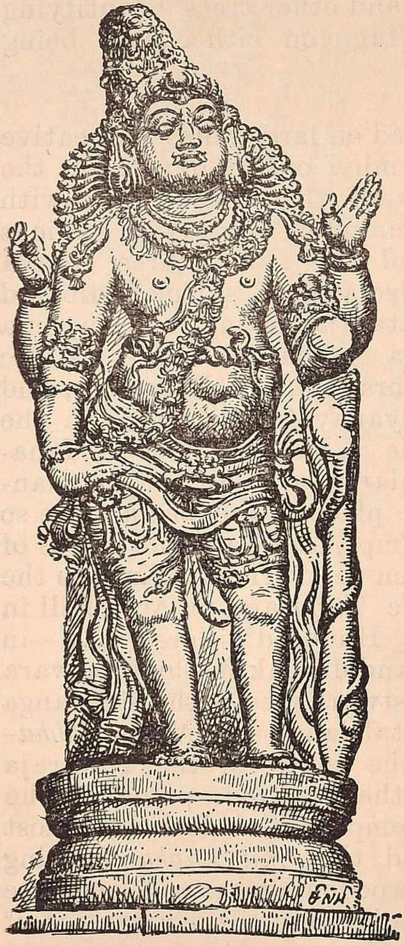
Caurtesy :
Archaeological Survey of India

Outside the temple walls, there run four car streets, sixty feet wide, with spacious flower gardens on all sides and avenues of fruit and other trees beautifying the whole place, their frontage on either side being occupied by houses.

The temple is conceived on large lines indicative of the magnificence of the mind of the devotees ; the most ancient part consists of the *Moolasthana* with *prakaras*, small and big, reminding us of the glorious spiritual achievements of the sixty-three Saiva Nayanmars. There are also a south shrine dedicated to the worship of Lord Nataraja hailing there in, in a car of Dance, the Nritta Sabha in answer to the importunate calls of Vyaghrapada and Patanjali ; and the Sivakami, and Pandyanayakam shrines, in the northern part of the temple. Minor shrines to Maha-Ganapati, Meenakshi Sundareswara, and Subrahmanyam are found all over the place. The shrines are so worked out, that the five important halls or *sabhas* of the place are set in between the various shrines to the delight of the devotee: the Thousand-pillared hall in the north-east corner, the Hundred pillared hall—in betweenSivakami amman andMeenakshi Sundareswara shrines commanding the eastward view of the Sivaganga tank, the hall of the immortal dance—*the Nritta Sabha*—just at the entrance in the south to the Nataraja shrine, *the Deva sabha*, the meeting place of the administrators of the temple, and last but most important the *Kanaka* and the *Chit Sabha* showing evidence of the original wooden structure, and the canopy of gold, which had occupied the attention of several successive monarchs of olden days and merchant princes of modern times.

The walls are huge and massive, built in different stages by Kulottunga III, and a secondary wall of defence round the temple by Virappa Nayak of Madurai (A.D. 1572-1595) and renovated in recent times by Pachaiyappa Mudaliar and other devotees.

THE GOPURAS

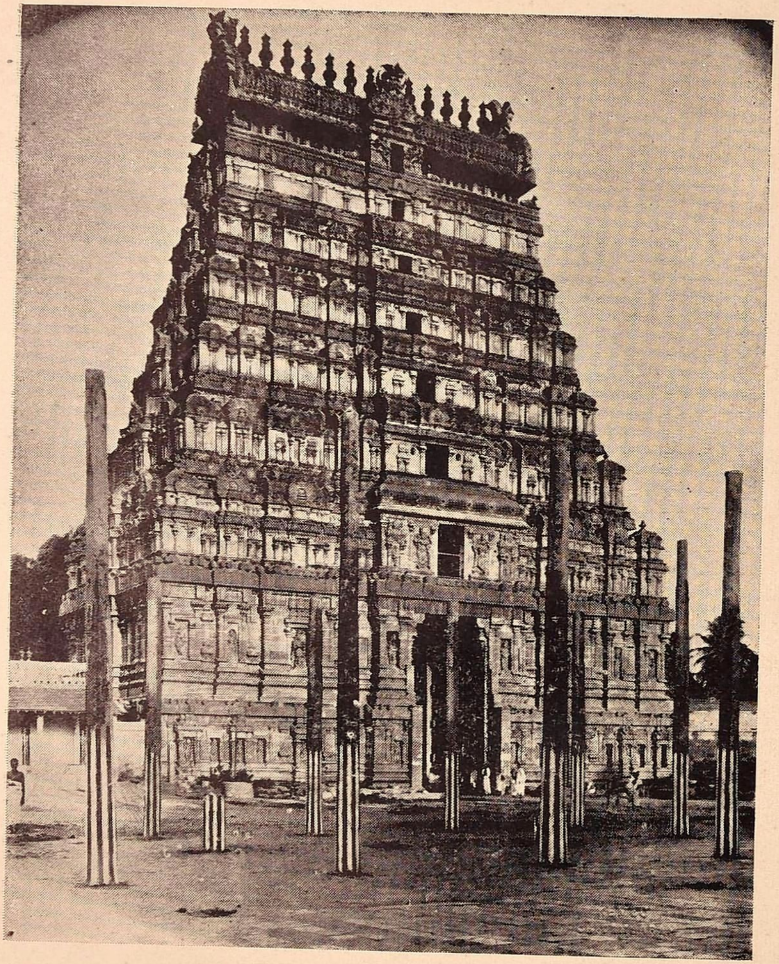


A **Dwarapalaka** of 12th century
[Courtesy—Ananda Vikatan]

The temple *Gopuras* are massive. They exemplify the later Chola style of architecture, in which gate towers are either as large as the *Vimanas* of the early Chola period, or actually dwarf the *Vimanas* of the shrine. They attract the devotion of the worshippers from afar, and claim our admiration besides, for the wealth of art lavished on them.

The gopuram gateways are each flanked on either side with huge massive monolithic stone pillars, thirty feet high and three feet square. The lower part of each of the gopuras is of granite, and the upper of brick and mortar, richly ornamented with plaster figures.

The East Gopuram bears the twin shrines of Vinayaka to the left and Subrahmanya to the right for worship in the first instance.



EAST GOPURAM—12th Century.

Courtesy :
Podhu Dikshiders

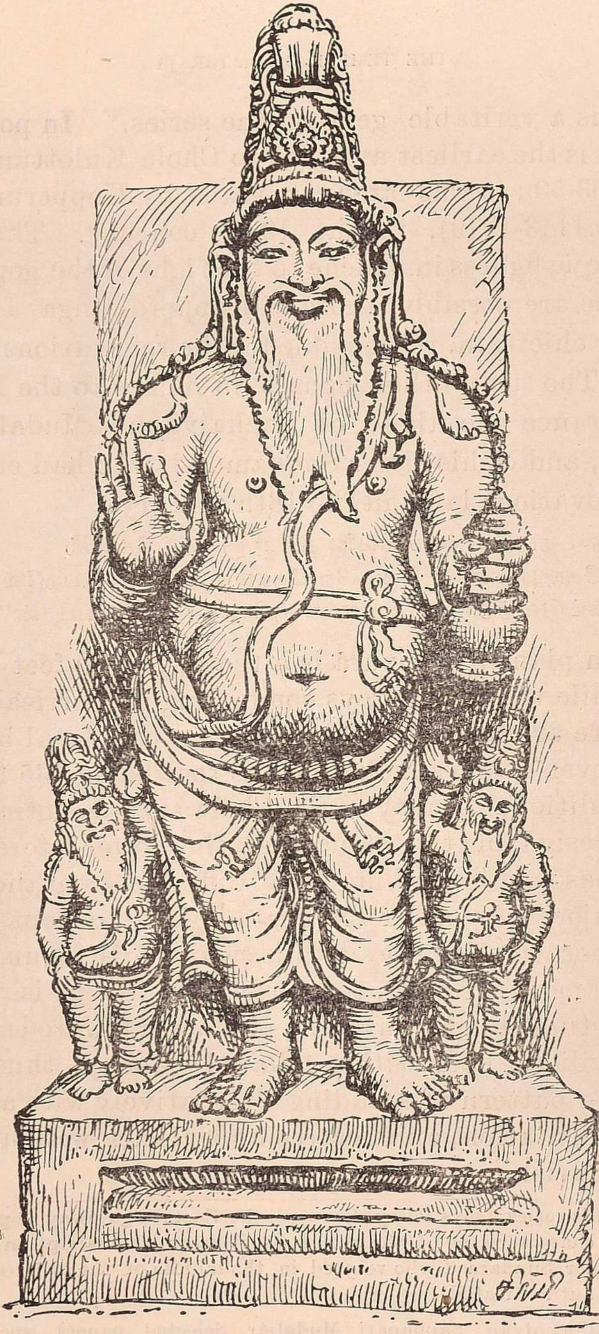
It is a veritable gem of the series.* In point of time, it is the earliest ascribed to Chola Kulottunga II. (A.D.1133-50); it was later renovated by Kopperunjinga II (A.D.1143-1279), in the 13th century. The two statuesque figures in a niche to the right of the gopuram entrance are possibly those of Kopperunjinga II, and another chieftain, responsible for the renovations in his time. The two other figures in niches to the left of the entrance are those of Pachaiyappa Mudaliar of Kanchi, and of his sister Subbammal who had carried out renovations later in the 18th century.

"தாபதர் போற்றுந் தில்லை தற்பரனார் தங்கோயிற்
கோபுரங் கீழ்த் திசையிற் கோலமுடன்—சீர்பெறவே
கட்டுவித்தா னெங்கள் காஞ்சிநகர்ப் பச்சையப்பன்"...**

"In plan this gopura is a rectangle 90 feet by 60 feet, while the two storeys comprising its vertical substructure are together 35 feet high; the total height of its seven storeys including the roof being 135 feet". The traditional beauty of the Chola style is noticeable in the design of the structure, the lower storeys in stone masonry being but little different from those of the Tanjore *Vimana* of 150 years before; except there are elaborations in the details which distinguish the existing mode. Above, the surface treatment is of the architectural kind, consisting of rows of pillared niches and pavilions, each with a foliated canopy, thus presenting a pattern of arcading alternatively with a zone of ornamentation, an effective appearance without being too lavish.

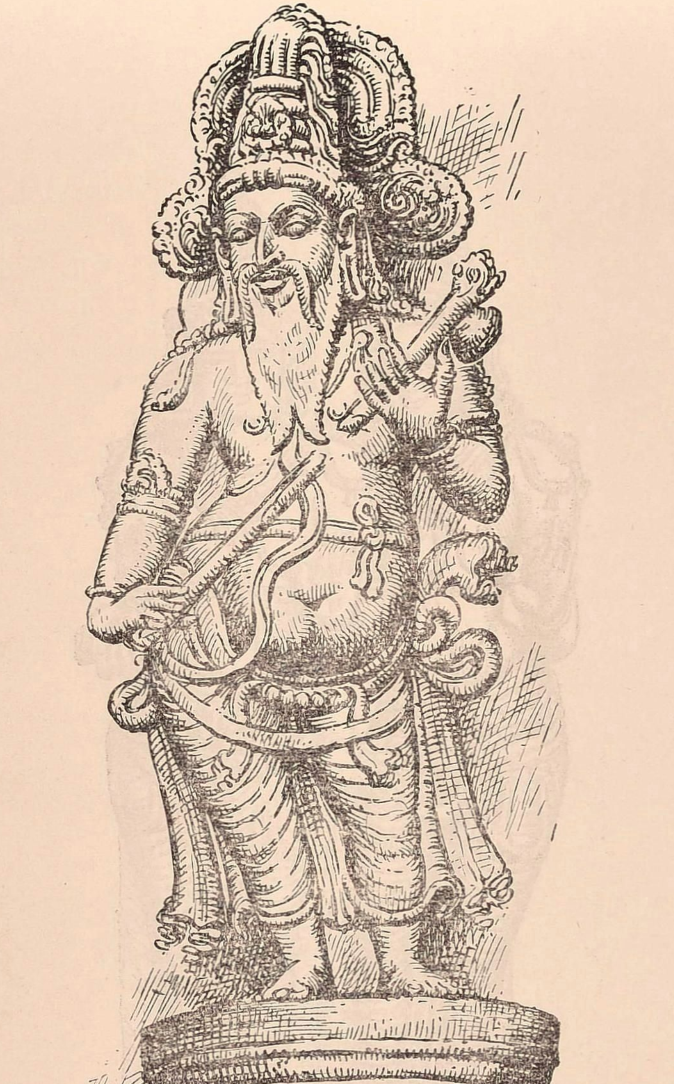
* Of this series, says Percy Brown-' the Eastern gateway is perhaps the most characteristic of the period as it bears an inscription of the Pandya ruler Sundara I who reigned in the middle of the 13th century. Its date is authenticated'.

**—Mahavidvan Sabhapati Mudaliar, Selected papers, speeches & poems.



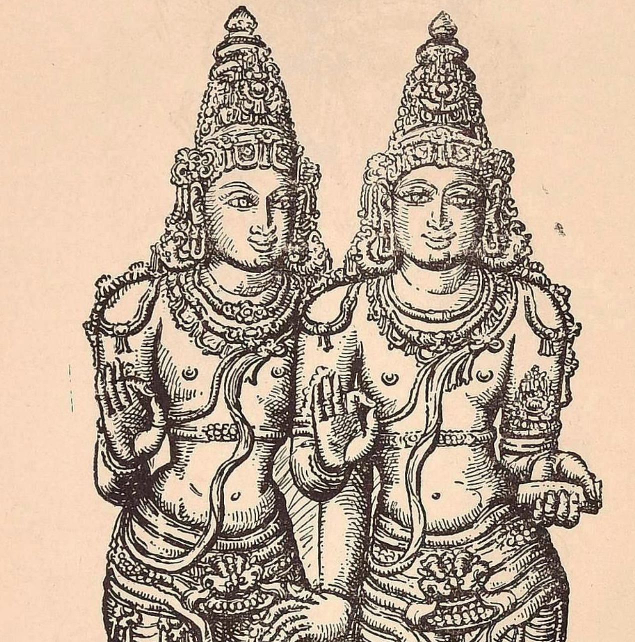
Courtesy
Ananda Vikatan

Sage Agastya
(East Gopuram)



Courtesy
Ananda Vikatan

Sage Narada
(East Gopuram)



Courtesy
Ananda Vikatan

Asvini Devas
(East Gopuram)

BRAHMA RIDING A SWAN

Eastern Gopuram.

Courtesy :
Archaeological Survey of India

A wealth of mythological decorations and sculptures are on its outer faces, and every one is a work of artistic skill. In the lower tier, on the eastern face of this gopuram are *Indra*, the lord of the celestials riding on his Iravata ; *Siva* bedecked as Kalyana-sundara: a bridegroom receiving the hand of Parvati ; *Agastya* with his Kamandul (See figure); *Narada* playing on his Yazh (See figure); and the *Asvinidevas*—the medicine men of the celestials. (See figure). There are also the exquisite pieces of *Ardhanariswara*, *Biksha-atana** and *Tripurantaka*. *Gajasamharamurti* is a beautiful cameo in stone, Siva having stripped the thundering (Gajamuhasura) elephant of its skin covers Himself with it, Parvati is pictured there in a panicky flight—so realistic and so marvellous. There are also *Agni*, the god of Fire, the beautiful sculptures of *Vyaghrapada* on the south side carrying a hook and a flower basket and *Patanjali on the north side*: the progenitors of the temple ; also St. *Tirumular* with the cadjan manuscript of *Tirumantiram* in his hand. In *Somaskanda*, right on the top of the Vinayaka shrine at the entrance, we see in between Siva and Parvati the young skanda standing. Siva as *Vrishabha-Vahana* standing and leaning with his elbow resting on the head of the bull ; *Rahu* and *Ketu*, as also *Brahma* riding a swan, on the western side, a singular figure rarely to be met with amongst such gopuram sculptures in south India. (See plate) Another remarkable sculpture is that of *Urdhva Tandava Murti* on the northern face of this structure. The niches on the western face of this gopuram are also covered with a wealth of statuesque figures. A characteristic dwarapalaka is seen to the left: (See figure) The lower tier carries *Agastya*, *Vishnu on Garuda*, *Parvati* and a fine piece of *Mahishasuramardhani*, much mutilated.

Two groups are seen on its upper tiers ; they are very characteristic: to the north, *Biksha-atana* with a number of Rishis in a row on either side of Him ; and on the south, the wedding of Siva with Parvati, with the Devas standing on either side witnessing the celestial marriage.

The inner gateway is a precious mine of art. The visitor is face to face with miniature cameos in stone. They are the 108 dance poses of *Bharatha Natya*, as the author Bharatha has described them in his classical treatise on Dancing: the *Natya Sastra.* All these have appropriate descriptive labels in grantha inscribed over each of these poses. The descriptive text over each is found sculptured in the east and west gopuras, though the poses are found sculptured in the northern and southern gopuras as well ; on the hall of the thousand pillars, in the temple of Sivakami, in the *Nritta Sabha*, in Pandyanayakam Subrahmanya temple ; and in the lower plinths of mandapas in every structure in the temple.

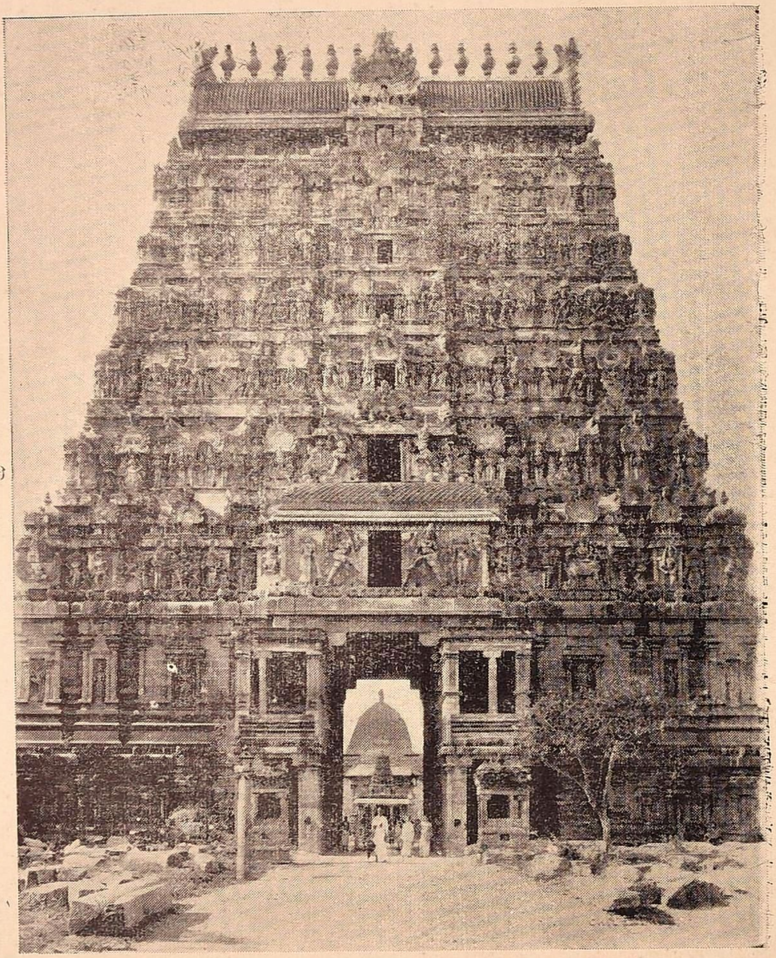
The postures are of the Lord Nataraja himself in his *Ananda Tandava*—the Dance of Bliss. They are for the connoisseur of art to admire and ponder over ; more particularly as the sculptor has worked them on hard granite, a most intractable material. Each of these poses occupies a space 15'' square, and on either side there is again another sculpture, portraying the drummer and the conductor of the dance giving the necessary prominence to the central theme and the danseuse who represents the characteristic poses. "The sculptor has really breathed life into every one of them, and they dance with joy, weep with sorrow, and

BHARATA NATYA POSES

Eastern Gopuram.

Courtesy :

Archaeological Survey of India



SOUTH GOPURAM—13th Century.

Courtesy :
Podhu Dikshidars

in every one of them their feelings of the heart are expressed in appropriate poses."*

These little panels and bigger ones found in all the four gopuras and plinth spaces, here as elswhere in numerous other shrines, have come to be almost a characteristic item in architectural schemes, possibly connected with the central idea of this temple and its Lord Nataraja, dancing the cosmic dance in Tillai's court.

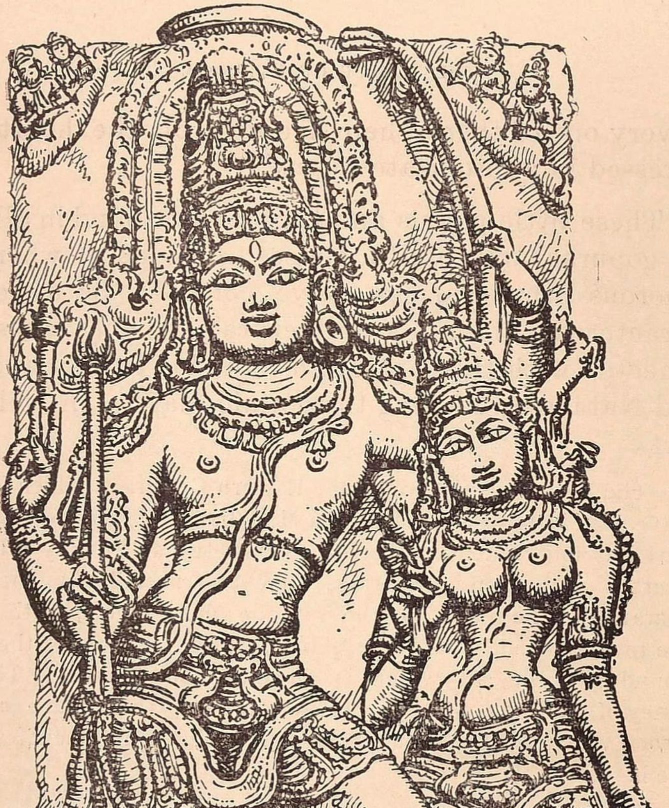
" The view from the top of the Eastern Gopuram (which is said to have been re-built by Pachaiyppa Mudaliar of Madras renown is a remarkably fine one. On all sides the stretches of paddy fields interspersed with clumps of trees give an exceedingly park-like appearance to the scene. On the west the whole pagoda, with much of the town beyond, is seen at a glance, while on the east the view as bounded by the sea which is distant about 7 miles. The tall chimney of the Porto-Novo corn works, and the mouth of the Coleroon which lies due east of this Gopuram, are prominent features in the landscape."

The South Gopuram known in inscriptions as " சொக்க சீயன் எழுநிலை கோபுரம்" is ascribed to Pallava Chokka Seeyan *alias* Kopperunjinga I (A.D. 1232—43),(2) a son-in-law of Chola Kulottunga III. It is seen from inscriptions that it was begun in A. D. 1237 and com-

* 1. Many of these figures are found mutilated ; Ninety three illustrations of these have been collected in Ann Rep, of Epi. 1914. (p. 74-81 ff.)

For a complete descriptive and authoritative account, see *Tandava-Laksana* by Dr. B.V.N. Naidu. and P.S. Naidu, 1936.

(2) S I. I. XII: No. 119: Ins. I of 1936-37. A contemporary of Rajaraja III (1216-1246), Pallava Kopperunjinga Deva-I, was a chief of the family of the Kadavarayas. He ruled from Sendamangalam and became independent in 1243 A-D. His titles include the names of Alagiya Seeyan and *Kanakasabhapati-Sabha-Sarva-Karya-Sarvakala Nirvahaka,* a title that was justified by his close association with the shrine. There are several of his epigraphs found on the temple walls.

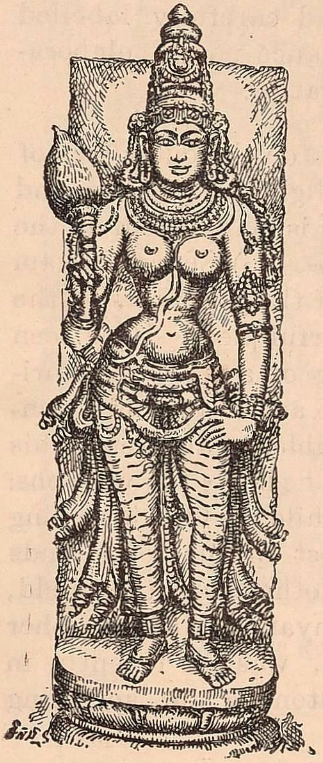


Courtesy
Ananda Vikatan

Siva as Tripurantaka
(South Gopuram)

pleted in 1240 A. D. while the Pallava was independent (xy) and the figures of a fish (Carp—கயல்) crest of the Pandya, in the central cross stones of the gateway speaks to Kopperunjinga's later subordination to this Pandya overlord in 1258 A. D. (S. I. I. V. 459).

There is arresting sculptural wealth on the southern face of this gopuram: *Gajasamharamurti* is very expressive: and on its northern face, *Ardhanarisvara, Mahishasura-mardhani, Siva as Bhikshatana*–on his way to Darukavana. *Siva as Tripurantaka* on the gopura entrance is another. Siva is seen in battle array with Uma by his side standing on the chariot, with a smile on his lips he looked at the Tripuras and with his look burn them. [See figure]



Dwarapalaki of 12th century
(Western Gopura)
[Courtesy—Ananda Vikatan]

The southern gopura gateway is considered to be more sacred for entering into the temple precincts, for worship, as it is situated almost facing the Lord Nataraja in His sanctum inside in the Chit-Sabha.

(xy) "A Tamil record, Ins 463 of 1902 on the northwall of the second prakaras of the temple of Sakalabhuvana Chakravartin Kopperunjingadeva refers to the construction of the south gopura. The Atur record, 285 of 1921 refer to the gift of the village of Atur by Alagiya Seeyan, Avani alappirandan Kadavan Kopperunjinga for building the southern entrance of the temple of Tiruchirrambalam Udaiyar at Perumbarrappuliyur (Chidambaram) as a gopura of seven storeys, named Chokka Seeyan—S. I. I, IV. Ins. 628, 629, 630.

There is a large Nandi in brick and plaster in a mandapam in the quadrangle. This Nandi is so placed as to face the Lord Nataraja inside in Ponnambalam.

The West Gopuram known in inscriptions as '*Sundara Pandyan Tiru-gopuram*', is ascribed to Jatavarman Sundara I, (A.D 1251—1270). As in the eastern gopuram, over every one of the carved miniature dance poses, at the gateway, there are descriptive labels—being couplets from Chapter IV of the *Bharata Natya Sastra*. As such, these are considered as the only authoritative, systematic and carefully labelled representations of the intricate dance poses, elaborately described in Bharatha's Treatise.

Of the wonderful statuesques on the outer face of the gopuram, Surya with a halo of light radiating around his head and lotuses on his hands is magnificent on the western face of the gopuram. (See figure) Subramanyam in a niche on the eastern face of the gopuram, to the right of the entrance, is a wonderful piece. He is seen as *Tarakari Subrahmanya*, riding on a peacock, spiritedly-attacking Tarakasura, the asura and his attendants. Three of his faces are visible, as also ten of his hands. In four of his right hands he holds the weapons: sword, axe, arrow, and club, while the fifth is pulling the bow strings. The uppermost of his left hands shows the *vismaya* pose and four others hold the shield, bow, noose and bell. Subrahmanyam again in another niche to the left of the entrance, was till recently in worship, and a noble edifice in stone is now springing up in front.

Narthana Vinayaka in a niche, in the lower tier to the right of the gopuram entrance is the *Kshetrapala*

WEST GOPURAM—13th Century.

Courtesy :
Podhu Dikshidars

Courtesy
Ananda Vikatan

Surya

Pillaiyar. A shrine with vimana and frontal mantapam have been added to his sanctum in the Chola days as he is referred to as *Kulottunga Chola Vinayaka*. It is now a sub-shrine in the temple. Umapati Sivam refers to him in *Koyir Puranam* as *Karpaga Vinayaka* in his invocatory verse to this work.* Great sanctity is attached to this shrine.

*"தன்னோங்கு மலரடியும் தளிரோங்கு சாகைகளும்
மின்னோங்கு முகக்கொம்பும் விரவியகண் மலர்களுமாய்
மன்னோங்க நடமாடு மன்னோங்கு மதிற்குடபால்
பொன் னோங்கல் முன்னோங்கும் பொற்பமர் கற்பகம் போற்றி"

The North Gopuram was built by Krishna Deva Raya I (A.D. 1509-30) of Vijayanagar in 1516, A.D. in commemoration of his victory over the King of Orissa. An inscription 373 of 1913, engraved on this gopura, says that Krishnadeva Raya after having started on a campaign against Simhadri Pottanuru-planted a pillar of victory there ; and returning thence, he paid a visit to Ponnambalam (Kanaka Sabha in Chidambaram), worshipped the god and built the northern gopuram of the temple*. A striking stone portrait sculpture of Krishnadeva Raya is seen in a niche on the western side of the gateway of this gopuram.

The gopuram is 157 feet above sea level,and about 140 above the ground level, and visible even from the sea at about seven miles distance, the lights lit on them on festival nights are well known landmarks for mariners.

A few of the sculptural marvels on its outer faces are: Durga on the south side of this gopuram and

*Ins. 174 of 1892 of Krishnadeva Raya, to the left of the entrance to the north gopuram of the temple records the building of this gopuram. Ins 175 of 1892 nearby is a Sanskrit version of above. Ins. 371 /1913 of Venkata deva-maharaya also refers to the building of this north gopuram.

NORTH GOPURAM—16th Century.

Courtesy :
Podhu Dikshidars

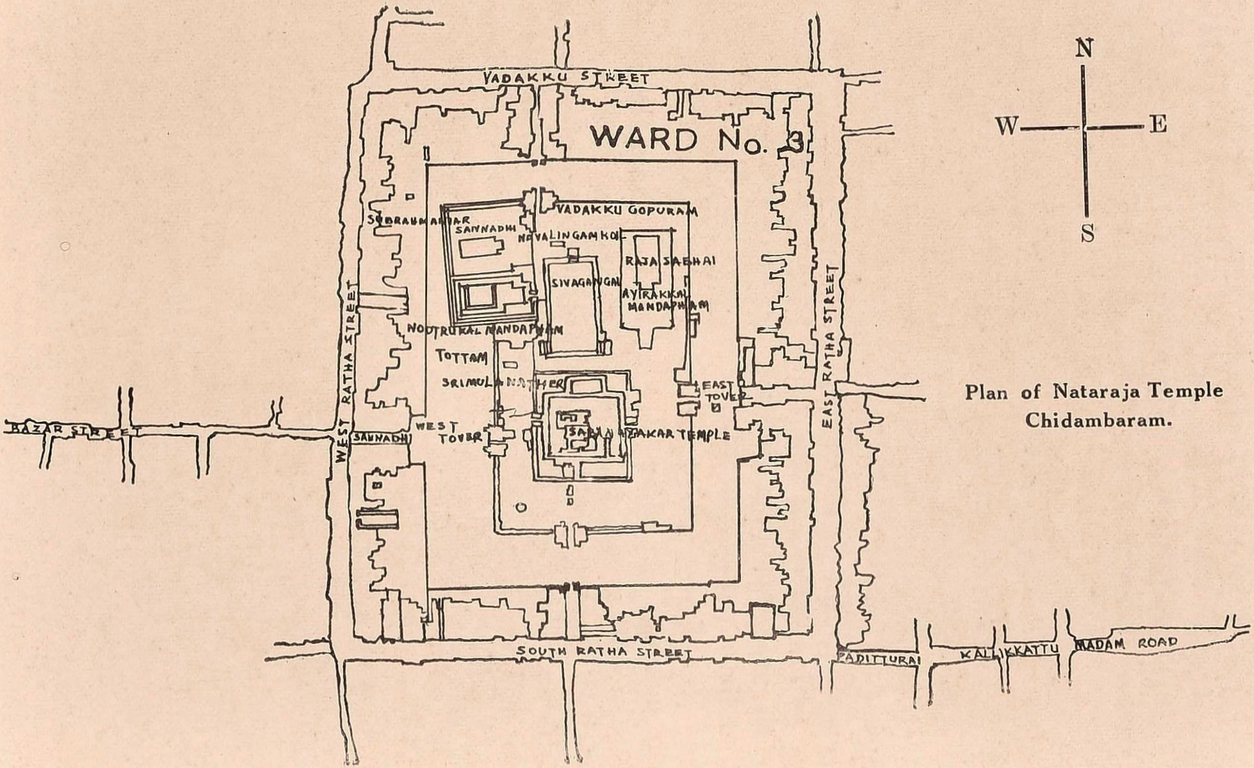
Vishnu riding on Garuda on the southern side on the lower tiers. Siva as Biksha-atana on the southern side is an exquisite piece. He is seen standing with his left leg planted firmly and the right slightly bent and kept forward suggesting that he is about to move. The head is ornamented with Jatamakuta, a snake on the right side with the crescent moon, and his ears with *makara kundalas.* On His feet he wears a pair of sandals, (see page 60) and he is surrounded by a number of bhuta-ganas, rishis and devas, with arms crossed on the chest in the *anjali* pose. And on the northern face of this gopuram is seen the wedding of Siva and Parvati, with Brahma acting as priest. And on either side of this niche a host of devas and rishis, are watching the holy ceremony.

And the most extraordinary fact about the temple is that the enormous quantity of granite dressed stones of which it is made had been brought hither from Tiruvakkarai, and the adjoining quarries, the nearest quarry, being forty miles away, and on the other side of the Vellar river ; and the greater wonder is that most of them have been brought all this distance at a time when vehicles were of the most primitive description and roads were practically non-existent. The stones were cut into sizes at the spot and given the final shape and form at the temple.

The Description of the Temple

The main entrance to the temple is through the great eastern door. Led by a flight of low broad stone steps (யாளைப்படிகள்), the third inner prakara—*the Kulottunga Cholan Kanda tiruveedhi* is reached. It is of majestic proportions, with aisles of well-carved granite pillars, and roofed with stone slabs about 25 feet in length. From here, the aisles branch out towards the south and north, and at the centre towards the west. Raised platforms are on side of these aisles, and against the walls a double pile of storeyed cloisters, with smaller shrines. Kattalai rooms, on the sides are distributed throughout. The aisle on the south stops near the Nritta sabha, and is continued on the west throughout. At the centre of the western aisle, there is a second great door-way, the *Akalangan-tiruvasal*, with an ornate mandapam outside, standing on eighteen pillars. This gives entrance into the temple for worshippers from the western gopuram gateway and the outer prakara-*the rasakkal tambiran tirumaligai tiruveedhi*. The door is named after "Akalangan"—the Chola Kulottunga III, who constructed this third inner wall and the great western entrance. The door-way leads down into the prakara again through a flight of stone stops. The worshipper here faces a Vinayaka, who nestles in a niche on top of the wall opposite. He is the உச்சிப் பிள்ளையார், also known as *Tiru-murai-kanda-Vinayakar*, who pointed to the spot, wherein the *Tiruppadigam* collections lay deposited, when Raja Raja Chola I came here in their quest. The Vinayaka remains as before facing the western door-way; the former vault of the Tiruppadigams at this

The Description of the Temple



Plan of Nataraja Temple
Chidambaram.

western corner is now the sanctum of the Samaya-charyas. The western and northern cloisters adjoining the main wall accommodate the sanctuary of the sixty-three Nayanmars. Here they receive daily *arathana*.

The Tiru-mulattanesvara shrine.

In between the third wall and the central aisle, there is the *Tiru-mulattanam* shrine with a surrounding corridor of a double row of pillars and a Chandeswara sanctum. This is the ancient spot of the swayambu Sivalinga, with the shrine of the Goddess Parvati as Umaiammai in front, and facing the south. In the southern wall of this shrine, there are in niches, Dakshinamurti and Irattaip-pillayar with a Vallabai Vinayaka

The *Alankara-mandapam* is at the end of this prakara. The is the place where the icons are decorated for festival processions, to give *darsan* to the devotees in the car streets. The prakaras and their colossal aisles and pillars have been renovated by the Ve-Sa-family of Kanadukathan, whose *Ishta-Devata* is Lord Nataraja.

The central aisle has to its right, the *Deva Sabha* and leads on to a second *tiruvasal* at its further end. Crossing it, the quadrangle bearing the central sanctum, the Perambalam is reached.

The Perambalam

The Perambalam is 325 feet square and its eastern, northern and western sides are enriched with a storeyed cloister. On the raised platform are shrines to Narthana Vinayakar, Lingodhbhavamurti, Subrahmanyam, the *Palliarai* of the God, also Kala Samharamurti, and Biksha-atana on the north and east. This storeyed

cloister is found repeated in the Sivakami temple, as also in the outermost prakaras designed for the purpose of affording shelter to the pilgrims for meditation and temporary stay. The lower tier of the platform is embellished with an admirable panel of embossed sculptuary in *alto-relievo*, of scenes from the sixty-four sacred sports (*Tiruvilaiyudals*) of Siva at Mathurai.*

To the east of the golden canopied central structure, there is the shrine of *Brahma-Chandeswara.***

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* Paranjoti munivar has immortalised in *Tiru-vilaiyadal-puranam*, Siva's sixty-four sacred sports, performed as His acts of grace to the delight of His bhaktas. A mural painting of these are on the walls opposite to the Golden Lily tank-the பொற்ருமரைக் குளம்) of Madurai Sri Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple.

** Two Chandeswaras are found within this shrine, Chandeswara with a single face, and another with four faces—Brahma Chandeswara.

The Saivagamas confirm the fact that St. Chandeswara besides being bestowed by Siva the Chandeswara-anugraha-padam (Note Sculpture at the Gangaikondacholeswara temple) was bestowed with the four faces of Brahma, which gave him the name Brahma -Chandesa',.

रुद्राग्निप्रभवं चण्ड कज्जलाभं भयानकम् ।
शूलटङ्कधरं रौद्रं चतुर्वक्त्रं चतुर्भुजम् ॥
मुखोद्गीर्णमहाज्वालं रक्तद्वादशलोचनम् ।
जटामकुटखण्डेन्दुमण्डितं फणिकङ्कणम् ॥
व्यालयज्ञोपवीतं च साक्षसूत्रकमण्डलुम् ।
श्वेतपद्मासनासीनं भक्तिप्रह्वार्तिनाशनम् ॥

"Rudragniprabhavam *Chandam* Kajjalabham bhayanakam. Sulatankadharam Raudram chathurvaktram chathurbhujam. Mukhodgirna mahajvalam Rakthadvadas'a lochanam. Jatamakuto Khandenthu manditham Phani kankanam Vyalayanjcpavitham-cha sakshasutra Kεmandalvm. Svetapadmasanasinam bhakti-prahvarti nas'anam."

A well on its side is the *Paramananda Koopam.* It furnishes water of excellent quality used for the abishekas and which preserve the beauty of the images un-impaired for centuries. The sacred water is much sought after, and the privilege of sprinkling its sacred drops is allowed for the general public on festive days.

The great court of Tillai is the golden canopied structure. Its central part is the Chit-Sabha, the sanctum of the mystic cosmic dance of Lord Nataraja with Goddess Sivakamasundari to His left. There is besides in this Sabha to their left the sanctum of Swarna Kala Bhairavar. Its frontal mandapam is the Kanaka Sabha. They stand on a raised stone basement, their three sides have wooden walls and the fourth has besides windows, and its golden canopy borne on beams placed over five pillars.

A covered cloister of polished black granite, on its three sides on a row of double pillars, has been added to this ancient wooden structure by the Tiruppani Nagarathars.

The Sabhas and the Sabha - Nayaka

The place of the dance of Lord Nataraja for the beatification of His fervent devotees became the *ambalam* or Sabha. Four others came in turn to be associated with the central one, the five together giving the name of *Sabhanayaka* and *Sabhapati* to the presiding Lord.

The Chit-Sabha or the Mystic hall is the innermost portion of the temple. It is the holiest. This *chit*

Chit Sabha

sabha, also known as Chit-ambalam has in turn given its name to the temple, and to the town. This sabha is the *sanctum-sanctorum* of Nataraja. Here Lord Nataraja is seen Dancing, and to his left is the sanctum of the goddess Sivakamasundari. To his right is the Chidambaram Rahasyam, wherein there is no image or Linga but a *Tiruvasi*—a semi circular arch or prabha with a veil in front. The *prabha* is marked by a string of golden bilwa leaves hung over it, the *prabha* revealing mere etherial space—the invisible presence—the symbol of God. It is for the worship of Siva in His akasic or ethereal form, invisible to human eyes. His worship is also associated with His form as the five elements: Earth, Water, Fire Wind and Ether. The other four places held sacred to such special worship in the form of elements being: Kanchee as Earth, Tiruvanaikka as water, Tiru-annamalai as Fire and Kalahasti as wind. St. Manikkavachakar refers to this akasic form of Siva in Tillai :

"பூதங்களைந்தாகிப் புலனாகிப் பொருளாகிப் பேதங்க
ளனைத்து மாய்ப் பேதமிலா பெருமையினை
கேதங்கள் கெடுத்தாண்ட கிளரொளியை மரகதத்தை"

The stone steps leading to the Chit-Sabha are five in number and are plated with silver. They are said to represent the five mystic letters of the *Panchakshara mantra :* Na, ma, ci, va, ya. The door posts are of silver, and bear embossed representations of Vyaghrapada and Patanjali on either side figuring as Dwarapalakas.*

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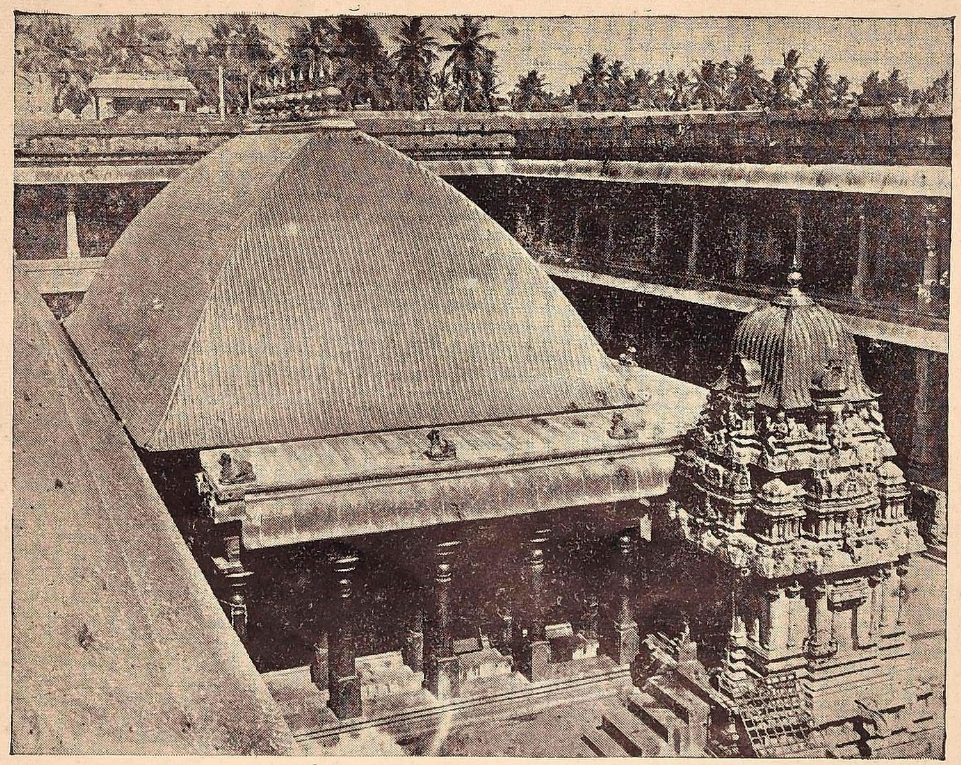
* The following extracts from the *Stalapuranas* explain the symbolism of the *Chit Sabha*:

Chidambaram Mahatmyam (Canto 15):—There is a Sabha called Ambara which is the abode of all good. In it, I constantly dance in happiness. It is known as Chidambaram, and consequently it is revered by all.



KANAKA-SABHA AND CHANDESA SHRINE

Courtesy :
Director of Information

The sanctum of Lord Nataraja and Sivaka ma sundari in the Chit Sabha faces the south. A raised rectangular mandapam stands opposite on forty pillars. This mandapam faces both the sanctums of Govindaraja and Nataraja shrines. A doorway (tiruvasal) on the southern prakara wall opens into a majestic mandapam outside in the third prakara, borne on four colossal and well sculptured pillars. The *Dwajastambha of Nataraja* stands at its centre encased in gold. Against this Dwaja Stambha (flag staff) is Nataraja's Chariot in stone, the *Nritta Sabha.*

(ii) **The Kanaka Sabha** is the frontal complement to the Chit Sabha. It is a small porch, standing on the same stone basement with wooden doors all round.

(*Contd.*) Canto 18: As I who am pure occupy the soul which is in the body even so in the world which is (like) the body, I sport in Chidambaram.

Pundarikapuram Mahatmyam, (*Canto* 59):—That Sabha (hall) is of the nature of Chit (Divine knowledge).

Tillaivana Mahatmyam, Canto 63:—The Chit Sabha which is in the middle of *Virat Purusha* (the great spirit) is an old one.

The Vedhi of Darsana shines on the southern part. The yantram of that name is small, invisible and imperceptible.

It is the shrine of Kama Dhenu; and it is the abode of Sankha and other Nidhis. It is well worshipped by Swarna Karshana Bhairava and the eight Lakshmis.

On its left side is placed the excellent Sparsana Chakra.

The Vedas (Rig, Yaju. Sama and Atharvana) the Puranas, Agamas, the Fine Arts, the Mechanical Arts, sacred knowledge etc., accordingly went soon to Pundarikapuram. The 64 Kalas and Vidyas (branches of knowledge) have on earth changed their shape as Vidyas.

They separately took their abode in the several places in the shape of pillars, beams, windows, nails, gold plates, silver, copper stone and earth.

This and the Chit Sabha are together roofed with plates of copper, and gilt with gold : the halls bear the name of *Kanaka Sabha* or *Ponnambalam.*

Successive Chola Kings and Pandyas have vied with each other in gilding their roof with gold from time to time. It is in Kanaka Sabha that the daily pooja to the Lord in Chit-Sabha is performed, as well, the six abishekas and arathanas for the Chandra-mouleesvara spatika Linga, known as அழகிய திருச்சிற்றம்பலமுடையார், and Ratna-Sabhapati. *Ratna-Sabha-pati* is an exact replica of Nataraja, carved out of a rose coloured crystal about 6" by 3", and to this image abisheka and worship is conducted daily during the second puja of the day at about 10 A. M.

(*Contd.*) In the south-east, is Rig Veda; the Siras or head is in the middle as two pillars. There are two (others) on the west.

These reside in Sadasiva Pita over it. In Iswara Pita there are shastras.

The pillars consisting of and representing the five elements are in Rudra's Vedi.

In the middle of Vishnu's Vedi there are various kinds of Tatvas in the shape of windows.

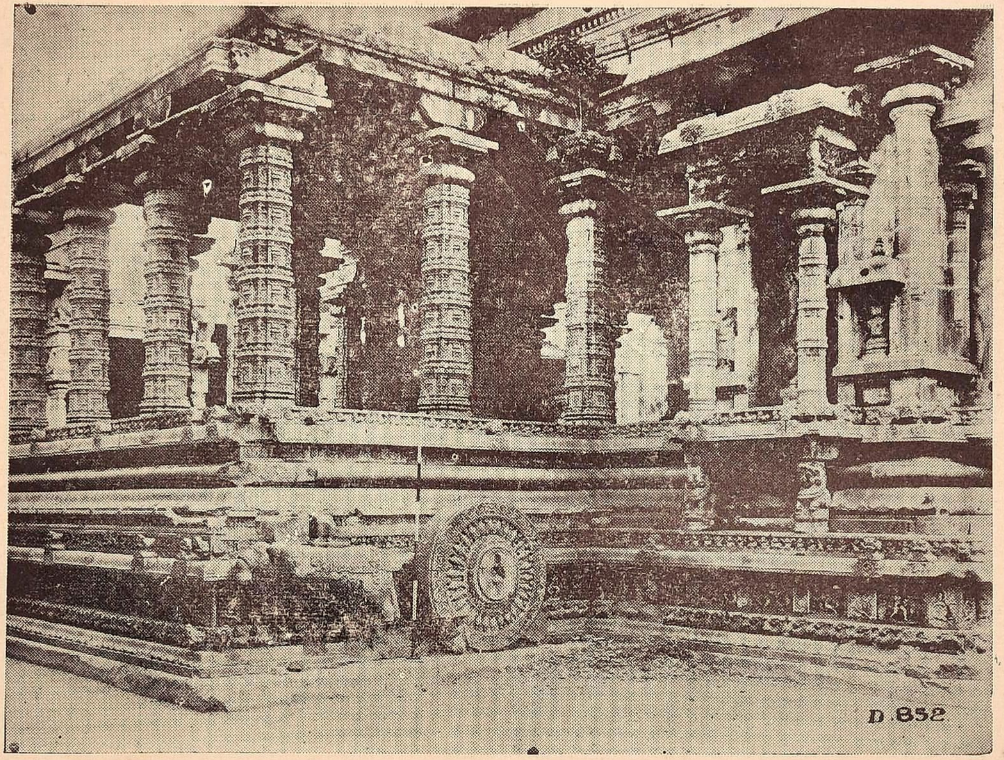
The group of 96 Tatvas are windows in five rows. The middle ones are Agamas or pillars. The great Goddess of Divine knowledge has taken its abode in the southern doorway. ** On the upper ceiling of the Sabha all the 64 Kalas (arts) take shape of beams, exist separately.

The various worlds numbering 224 are in the shape of planks. The inspirations and expirations numbering 21,600 are like gold leaf.

All the various kinds of nerves numbering 72,000 take shape as nails.

The Saktis, Vama, Gyestha, Rowdri, Kali, Kalivikarini, Bali, Balavikarini, Pramathani, Manonmani, these exist in the shape of stupis (domes).

—*Journal of the Annamalai University* Vol. I. 2. Oct. 1932 p. 141—144.

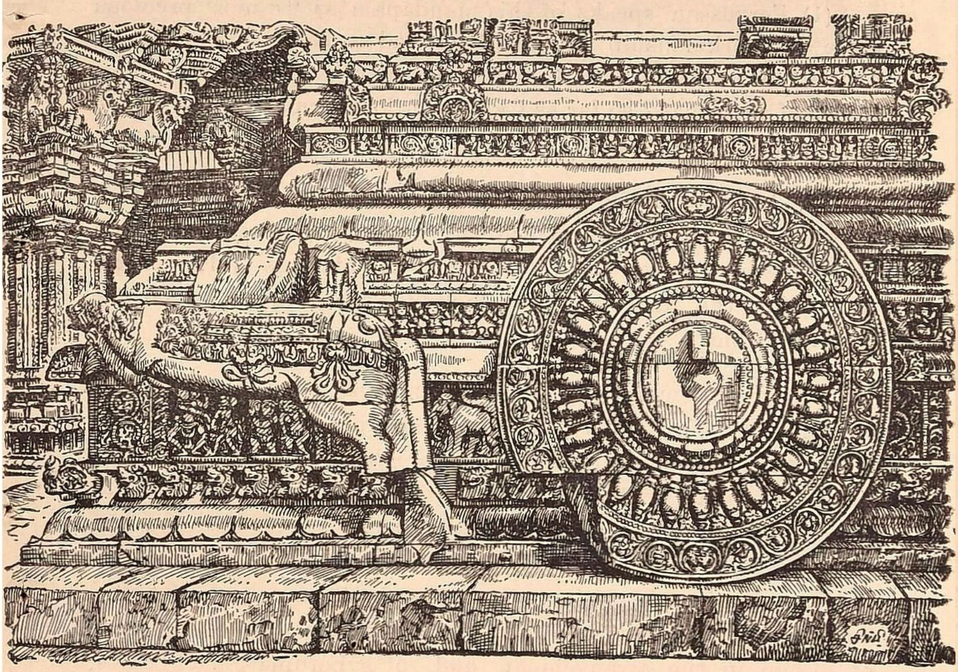


NRITTA SABHA

Courtesy :
Archaeological Survey of India

(iii) **The Deva Sabha** lies outside the central courtyard, and in the third prakara to the east of Nataraja's sanctum. It is a spacious square hall, walled on all sides, and bearing within it the metal and artistic treasures of the temple. Pujas to the Utsava icons are conducted here, also their *abisheka*, *alankara* and *arathana* before they are taken out on festival processions.

(iv) **The Nritta Sabha** or the Hall of the Dance is the most interesting and most artistic structure of the temple. It is ascribed to Chola Kulottunga III (A. D. 1178-1216). It is possibly the earliest of the splendid edifices in the temple. Here stood the original shrine of the goddess Kali in the Tillai forest of old. It is a graceful mandapam of exquisite style, supported by 56 pillars, about 8 feet high and most delicately carved from top to bottom.



—*Courtesy Ananda Vikatan*

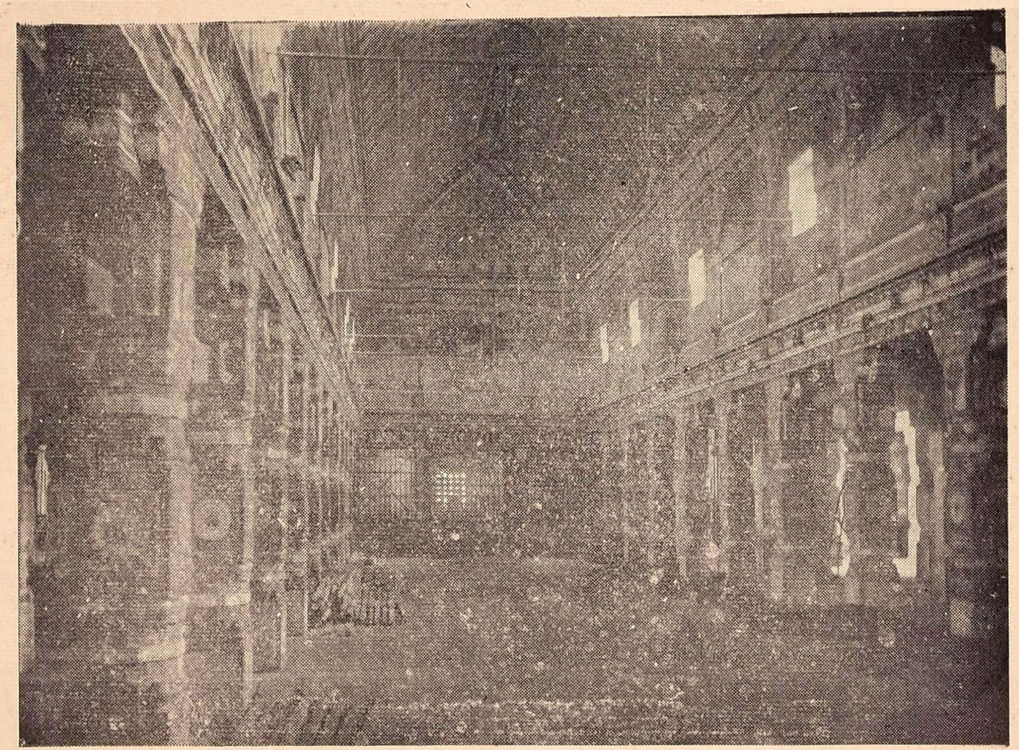
It rests on a stylobate, ornamented with graceful dancing figures and with wheels and prancing horses at its sides—the whole representing a chariot on wheels.(1) The figure of Siva playing music on a five-mouthed pot *Panchamuka vadyam*, decorates one of the tiers of sculptures on the front facade of this mandapam; also a little higher up is seen a tiny graceful statuesque figure of Kulottunga III. (2) The sanctum within bears the figure of Nataraja as Urdhva Tandava Murti.

The Raja Sabha is the fifth of the series. (3) It is the *Devasiriya mandapam*, the Hall of State; thousand-pillared, and 338 feet long by 197 feet wide. It is

(1) Fergusson speaks of this mandapam as "a most precious piece of workmanship in sculpture and as containing dancing figures" more graceful and more elegantly executed than any others of their class, so far as I know in Southern India"—*History of Indian and Eastern architecture. I. p. 374.*

(2) A replica of the above figure of about 3 feet in height is also seen in a niche at the south west corner of this sabha, which also possibly represents its author, Kulottunga III, exactly resembling the figure of the Chola in the temple he built at Tiribhuvanam.

(3) Of this mandapam, Fergusson says that "the pillars are arranged in 24 in front by 41 in depth making 984; but in order to get a central space, four in the porch, then 28, then 2, again 24 have been omitted, altogether 58; but, on the other hand those of the external portico must be added, which nearly balances the loss, and makes up the 1000. It must be confessed this forest of granite pillars, each of single stone, and all more or less carved and ornamented, does produce a certain grandeur of effect, want of design in the arrangement, and of subordination of parts, detract painfully from the effect that might have been produced"



THOUSAND-PILLARED RAJA SABHA—Interior view

Courtesy:
Archaeological Survey of India

ascribed to Chola Kulottunga III (1178—1216) who built it for the purpose of St. Sekkizhar's inaugurating the *Tirut-tondar-puranam.***

The Stala Puranas

The Stala Puranas give the genesis of the temple, and its growth. *Koil Puranam* by St Umapati Sivachariar, *Chidambara Puranam* by Tillaipurana Tirumalainathar, *Chidambaram Mahatmyam* by Arumukha Navalar and *Tiru-chitra Koota mahatmyam* are in Tamil; and those in Sanskrit are *Tillaivana mahatmyam Vyaghrapura*-(Puliyoor) *Mahatmyam*, *Pundarikapura Mahatmyam Chidambara Mahatmyam* and *Yema Sabhanatha Mahatmyam*, also *Chidambara Rahasyas Bhujangastakams*, *Kavachams*, *Stotrams* and *Natakas* of devotional interest.

** Three sculptured reliefs of great artistic, cultural and probable historic interest are pointed to on the granite panels flanking the upper flight of stairs, leading from the south into the Hall of the 1000 pillars. They are three "Chitrardha" sculptures, one representing a young lady in graceful posture, and 2nd and 3rd representing her attendants:—possibly suggesting Buddhist influences—B. V. N. & P. S. in *Journal of the Annamalai University*. III. ii. p 276,

Courtesy
Ananda Vikatan

Siva as Bhiksha-Atana
(North Gopura)

The Dance of Siva and the Origin of the Temple

The tradition* behind the dance centres in the forest of Darukavana, where Siva danced out the pride of heretics too boastful of their profound learning. Siva took the form of a Bhiksha-atana-mendicant, bowl in hand and went accompanied by Vishnu, disguised as Mohini. The Rishis and their *Patnis* were infatuated on seeing the beautiful pair. They soon found out their disguises and prepared to destroy them. Out of a sacrificial fire they raised, a tiger came out and sprang at Siva; He, peeling off its skin wrapped it round his waist. Then the rishis sent forth a venomous serpent, which, Siva caught and entwined around His neck. Siva then danced to the great consternation of the Rishis. Now again, they sent against Him, an *apasmara purusha*; Muyalaka on whom the dancing Lord placed His foot, and he writhed on the ground. The rishis were subdued. Siva now danced the Nadanta dance, which all the Gods and Rishis beheld. The heretic rishis begged the Lord's pardon and were blest.

The account proceeds that Adisesha heard the raptures of Vishnu as he recounted with delight the divine sight of Siva's dance at Darukavana; and the devotee begged Vishnu to be allowed to witness the dance himself, and Vishnu consented. Adisesha went in penance and prayed to Siva for a sight of the dance. Siva appeared and vouchsafed him the dance in Tillai. Adisesha was accordingly born on earth as Patanjali, and he proceeded southwards towards the forest of Tillai. Here Vyaghrapada also joined him with the self same object—to witness the advent of the Lord and his dance. Each consecrated here his own *asram*, Patanjali at Ananteeswaram and Vyaghrapada at Tiruppuleeswaram in Chidambaram, besides worshipping Siva as the Moolastana Linga in the Tillai forest.

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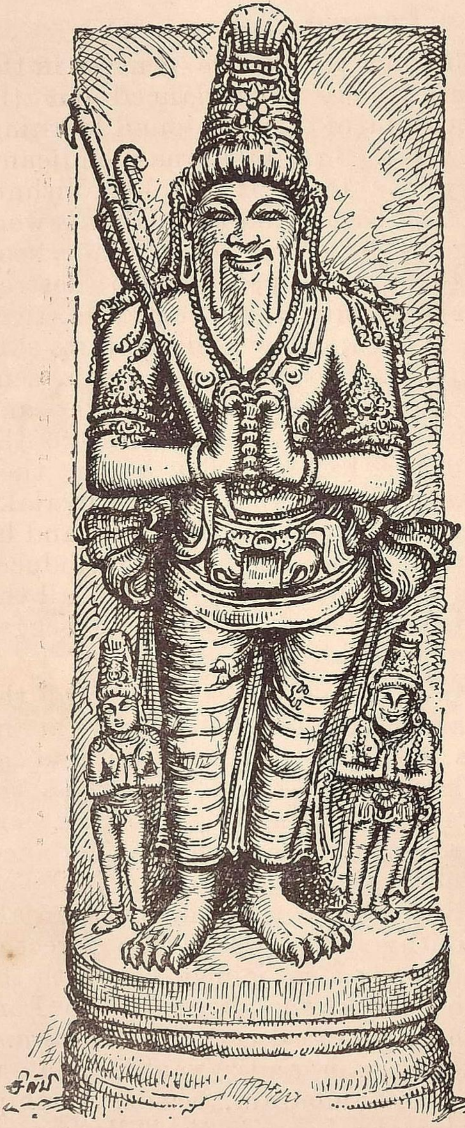
* See *Skanda-purana* Daksha-Kanda; Chaps. XIII and XIV for an account of the dance in Darukavana, also Chaps. XXII and XIV of Kachiappa munivar's *Kandapuranam* 30-127; also *Koyir-Puranam* of St Umapati Sivacharyar.



Conrtesy Ananda Vikatan

Vyaghrapada

Vyaghrapada was the son of Madhyandina Rishi, living on the banks of the Ganges. He had come south wards directed by his father, and in the forest of Tillai had found the Swayambu Sivalinga divinely installed under a banyan tree, near a tank. He had found the Lord of his heart and poured forth his yearnings of the soul. His devotion was intense, and he prayed for the boon of a tiger's feet and claws to climb up trees and pluck flowers for worship (pooja), with eyes that could see them in the dark, even before the bees could taste the honey of the blossoms. His prayers were granted. The devotee was hence forth *Vyaghrapada* - he with tigers foot - and continued his divine service in the quest of the *Ananda Tandava* of the Lord at Tillai.

And when Siva actually came, goes the account, the guardian goddess of the place, Kalikadevi would not allow Him the sojourn. It was eventually decided that in a contest, as to who could dance the better, the vanquished should leave the place in undisputed possession of the victor. The dance proceeded. At one stage, the Lord's ear-rings, fell and he danced so deftly that he picked them up from the floor and restored them to His ears, without anybody noticing the loss or the recovery. Siva by this *Urdhva Tandava* won the contest, and Kalikadevi left her sanctum for her present shrine on the nothern outskirts of the city which has given rise to the local sayin

"தில்லைக் காளி எல்லைக் கப்பால்" and
"தில்லைக் காளி எல்லைக் காப்பாள்"

The wherefore of this contest and the sequel thereof is possibly explained by St Manikkavachakar in the திருக்காழல் verse, as one expressful of Siva's grace.

"தேன் புக்க தண்பணைசூழ் தில்லைச் சிற்றம்பல வன்
தான் புக்கு நட்டம் பயிலும் அது ஏன், ஏடி?
தான் புக்கு நட்டம் பயின் றிலன் ஏற் றரணி எல்லாம்
ஊன் புக்க வேற் காளிக் கூட்டாங், காண் சாழலோ!" —14

The Lord of Tillai's court, by cool palms girt, whence honey drips,
There entering does a mystic dance perform; what is that My dear?
Had he not entered there, all the wide earth had quick become
Abode of demons armed with flesh-transfixing spears; chalalo!
—*Pope's Translation*

Nataraja danced now the *Ananda Tandava*-the Dance of Bliss, in the presence of Sivakamasundari and all the Gods and Rishis; and the two devotees Patanjali* and Vyaghrapada were satisfied to their

* By the end of the 3rd century B.C or a little earlier, the Yoga system of Philosophy began to spread in Tamilagam: and Patanjali lived at Chidambaram and wrote his commentary on Panini's Grammar, *Ashtadyayee,* a Vyakarana work, a treatise on Medicine, his Yoga Sutras and Tantric rules for the worship of Nataraja.

heart's content.* The Lord granted their further prayers to continue the mystic dance here in Ponnambalam for ever, for the grace of His devotees.**

St. Umapati Sivacharya gives in his descriptive verses in *Koyil Puranam*, an account of the advent of the Lord Nataraja and His Dance.

1. எண்ணருங் காதல் கூரு மிருவருங் காண ஞானக்
கண்ணினை நல்க முன்னைக் காரிருள் கழிவுற் றின்ன
வண்ணமென் றறிய வாரா வளரொளி மன்றுண் மாதோ
அண்ணனின் ருடு கின்ற வானந்த நிருத்தங் கண்டார்.

2. திருவடி நிலையும் வீசுஞ் செய்யகா லுஞ்சி லம்பு
முருவள ரொளியும் வாய்ந்த வூருவு முடுத்த தோலு
மரைதரு புரிவுங்கச்சி எணிகளு மழகா ருந்தி
மருவிய வுதரபந்தக் கோப்புநூல் வாய்ப்பு மார்பும்.

3. வீசிய செய்ய கையும் விடதரக் கரங்க வித்த
தேசும் வண் டுடியு மங்கிச் செறிவுமுன் றிரண்ட தோளுங்
காசை கொண் மிடறுந்தோடார் காதும் வெண்குழையுங்காண
மாசிலா மணிவாய் விட்டு வழங்கிடா நகைம யக்கும்.

4. ஓங்கிய கமலச் செவ்வி யொளிமுக மலருங் கண்கள்
பூங்குழ லுமையை நோக்கும் புரணமும் புருவப் பொற்பும்
பாங்கமர் நுதலும் பின்ருழ் படர்சடைப் பரப்பும் பாம்பு
நீங்கருந் தாரு நீரு நிலவுமே னிலவு நீறும்.

5. கடிமல ரணைய வாரிக் காரிரு ளளகஞ் சேர்த்த,
முடியுநன் னுதலும் பொட்டு முயங்கிரு புருவ வில்லும்,
வடி கொள்வேல் விழியுங் காதும் வளர்குமிழ் மலருந் தொண்
படிவவா யிதழு முத்த நகையுமெய்ப் பசுமை வாய்ப்பும். [டைப்

6. பூங்கமு கமர்க முத்திற் பொலிந்தமங் கலநாண் பொற்பும்
பாம ரமையார் தோளும் பங்கயச் செங்கை தாங்கு
மோங்கு செங்கழுநீர்ச் செவ்வி யொளிதரு மலருந் தாருங்
கோங்கரும் பவைப ழித்த கொங்கையுங் குலவு பூணும்.

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* A Temple festival of ten days to Patanjali and Vyaghrapada in Thaipushya is conducted perpetuating their association with the temple.

** *Jaimini*, the author of *Purva mimamsa Sutras* (B. C. 300) is another mentioned as having stopped with them for the worship of Lord Nataraja, and brought out the *Vedapadastavam in* praise of the Lord. The statuesque figures of the three are seen sculptured in *alto relievo* in the Ponnambalam quadrangle.

The interpretation of the dance is also found in some of the other well-known works in Tamil literature viz., St. Tirumular's *Tirumantiram* in *Tirukkuttu Darsana* (vision of the sacred dance) in *Unmai Vilakkam* (verse 36) of Umapati-Sivam and in *Chidambaram Mummanikkovai* of SilaSri Kumaragurupara Svamigal.

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7. துடியம ரிடையும் பாந்தட் டொகு பணந் தகுநி தம்ப
வுடையகர் துகிலு மல்க வொல்கிய நிலையுஞ் செய்ய
வடிமலர் மிசைய ணிந்த வாடகப் பாட கக்கீழ்
விடுசுடர்ச் சிலம்பும் வாய்ந்த மெல்லியல் வியந்து காண.

8. ஆடிய பெருமான் வெய்யோ னலர்கதி ராயி ரத்துக்
கூடிய மண்ட லம்போற் குறைவிலா வகைநி றைந்து
நாடரு ஞான மன்று ளுமுய்ய வயன்மான் முன்பு
தேடரு மேனி கொண்டு திருநடஞ் செய்யக் கண்டார்.

—கோயிற் புராணம்—நடராச சுருக்கம், 10-17.

* * *

வேதங்க ளாட மிகுஆ கம மாடக்
கீதங்க ளாடக் கிள ர்அண்டம் ஏழாடப்
பூதங்க ளாடப் புவனம் முழுதாட
நாதங் கொண் டாடினான் ஞானானந் தக் கூத்தே.

—திருமூலர்.

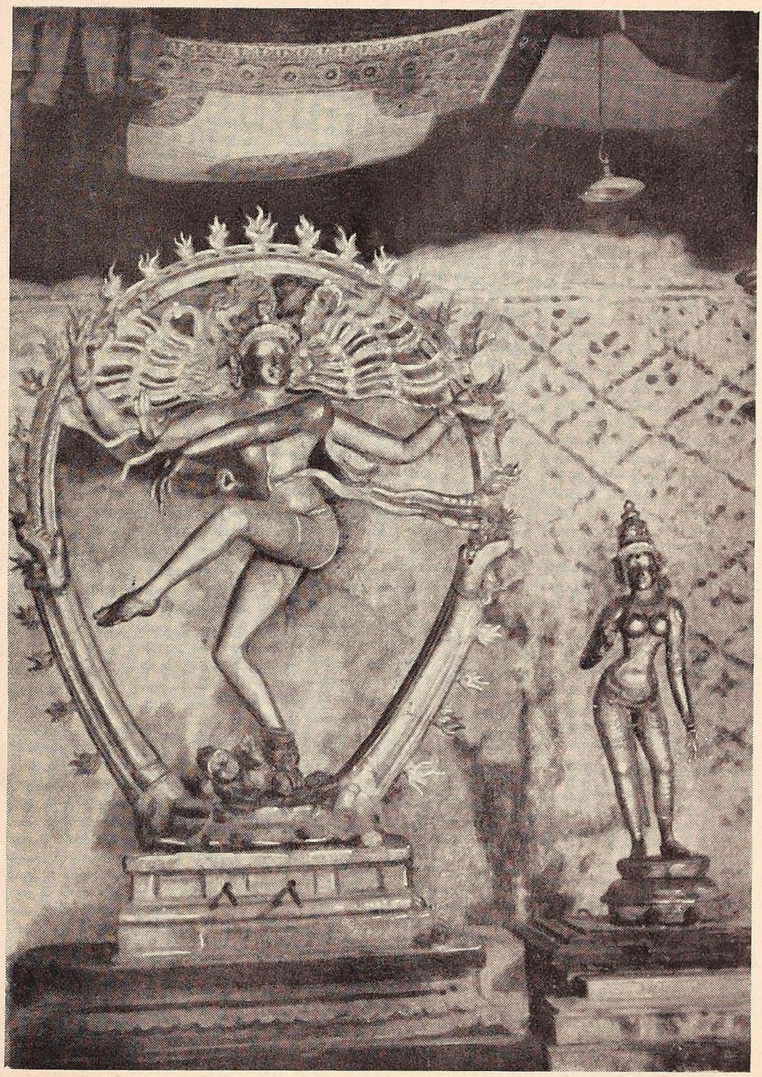
ANANDA TANDAVA OF SIVA, ITS SYMBOLISM

The images of Nataraja represent Siva dancing. He has four hands and his braided and jewelled hair whirl as he dances. In his hair may be seen a wreathing cobra, a skull, and the mermaid figure of Ganga on whom rests the Crescent Moon, and a wreath of Cassia leaves. He is adorned with necklaces, and armlets, a jewelled belt, anklets and bracelets, finger and toe-rings. He wears a tiger's skin on His loin, and a scarf flutters about Him and the sacred thread is on His body. The right hand holds a drum, the other is uplifted in the sign of '*abhaya*'—'do not fear.' His left hand holds fire, the other points down to His feet—the *Kunchita padam*—the abode of perpetual bliss. His right foot rests on the back of *Muyalakha*, a dwarf, while the left foot is raised.

Siva as Nataraja or "Lord of the dance."

"Siva stands in a halo or circle of flame (*jvala mala prabha-mandala* Tamil *tiruvasi*), a complete circle (*vrittakara prabha*) united with the figure both at head and foot. A complete circle so united is rare in such bronzes. The circle issues from the mouths of a pair of dolphins (makaras). The halo symbolises the *Pranava*, the mystic word *Aum* which is the generalized symbol of all possible sounds and therefore the fittest symbol of the logos.

"The hair of the head is braided, the upper part tied together to form a crown (*baddha veni*), terminating in a crest of peacock feathers, and at the back a circular knot (Sikha Chakra), the lower braids falling loose (*lamba veni*) and whirling in the dance. At the base of the crown is a human skull, symbol of Siva's destroying energy, On the lower braids is a mermaid on the right, representing the river Ganges, symbol of fertility and of God's Grace. According to tradition the Ganges, a celestial river, was permitted by Siva to descend on earth in answer to the prayers of King



SRI NATARAJA AND SIVAKAMI

*Rajarajesvaram,
Tanjore*

" The essential significance of Siva's Dances is threefold" says Dr. A. K. Coomaraswami : " First, it is the image of his rhythmic play, as the source of all movements within the cosmos—which is represented by the arch or *Tiruvasi.*

Secondly, the purpose of the Dance is to release the countless souls of men from the snare of illusion—and thirdly the place of the dance—Chidambaram—the centre of the Universe, i.e.' within the Heart.

[See Appendix—The House of God.]

(*Contd.*)

Bhagiratha, and the force of the fall was broken by Siva receiving it in his matted locks for a time to save the earth from being crushed by the weight of the falling stream ; a poetic explanation, probably of the first issue of the river from the Himalayan snows. On the loose braids on the left are the crescent moon, symbol of Siva's grace and glory, symbol also of time (for the moon is the measurer of time); and a cobra which by reason of its deadly venom, may be taken as a symbol of destruction and obscuration but is here rather a symbol of the cosmic force-*Kundalini.*

" Siva is represented with three eyes, symbols of sun, moon and fire and of time past, present and future. The third eye is located between the eyebrows and is known as the eye of wisdom. It is also seen in images of Buddha. It is supposed to exist in all men but closed except in the Jnani or a Seer. Its site is indicated by the spot of sandal or other aromatic paste which Hindus usually wear on their foreheads to remind them of the latent power of vision which it should be their endeavour to awaken and master. This third eye is probably connected with the pineal gland, which physiologists regard as the vestige of an aborted eye and in which Descartes placed the seat of the Soul.

" Siva wears in his right ear a man's ear-ring (*makarakundala*) and on his left a woman's (*tatanka* or *todu*), to indicate that he is both male and female. (Ardhanariswara).

" He wears a necklace of skulls of Brahmas and Vishnus, symbolising that he has seen the universe created and destroyed

Philosophically interpreted, the dance is said to represent the *Panchakritya*—the five-fold activity of the supreme being, *viz.*

தோற்றந் துடியதனில் தோயுந் திதி யமைப்பில்
சாற்றியிடும் அங்கியிலே சங்காரம்—ஊற்றமாய்
ஊன்று மலர்ப் பதத்தே லுற்றதிரோதமுத்தி
நான்ற மலர்ப் பதத்தே நாடு

—" உண்மை விளக்கம்."—36

(*Contd.*)

times without number. After destroying the universe, he wears its ashes on his body. Hence the use of ashes by his devotees as a sacrament, the symbol of purification by the fire of his Grace, for each soul must lose the world to find God.

" He also wears a necklace of *rudrakshas*, berries of the *elaeocarpus ganitrus*, symbols of his pity, being regarded as solidified tears wept by him for the woes of his devotees. Rosaries of these beads are worn by Siva's devotees. He also wears the *Upavita*, the sacred thread, over the left shoulder and under the right arm. The *Upavita* generally consists of 96 strands, representing the 96 *tatvas*, categories or constituents of the universe. No ritual can be celebrated without wearing the *Upavita*. Siva here wears it to indicate that He is Lord of all acts. (*sarva—karmarhaka*).

" Cobras (nagas) are coiled round his body and in his hair, symbols of the great cosmic force which the Raja Yogis call Kundalini and represent as a cobra, relics also perhaps of the serpent worship of the aborigines of India and Ceylon. According to the Raja Yogi, there runs through the spinal cord a canal called the *Sushumna*, at the base of which is a plexus called *Muladh' arva* (basic), and at the crown in the brain the plexus called the *Sahasrara* (thousand—petalled lotus).

" In the basic plexus is stored the cosmic energy, an infinitesimal fraction of which is distributed throughout the body by the sensory and motor nerves, and mainly by two columns of nerves called *Ida* and *Pingala* on either side of *Sushumna* canal. This canal, though existing in all animals, is closed except in the Yogi. He dispenses with sensory and motor nerves, opens the

Sristi—Creation, or evolution from the drum; *Stithi*—preservation or continuation from the hand of hope—the *abhaya hasta*; *Samhara*—destruction from fire; *Tirobhava*, veiling, illusion or concealment, from the foot held aloft; and *anugraha* release,—salvation or bestowal of grace from the fourth hand pointing to the lifted foot wherein to seek the refuge of the soul.

(*Contd.*)

canal, sends through it all mental currents, makes the body a gigantic battery of Will and ronses the vast coiled up power from the basic plexus to the 'thousand petalled lotus in the brain. As the power travels up the canal, higher and more wonderful powers of vision and knowledge are gained till the goal is reached of union with God. This power is pictured as a serpent coiled up (hence the name *Kundalini* at the basic plexus and gradually rising with hood erect to the plexus in the brain, *somewhat as in this il,ustration*. The serpent of the Nataraja bronze thus represent the cosmic force coiled in Siva, the supreme *Yogi*.

He is represented with four arms;

The right upper hand holding a drum (*damaruka*) the symbol of creation or, more correctly, projection or evolution (*srishti*), the source of vibration (*nada*). the first stage of evolution. The drum taps are the alternations of phase extending over vast regions of space and time.

The right lower hand (*abhaya kara*) raised in token of dispelling fear and of assurance of protection, symbol of preservation (*sthiti*).

The left upper hand, holding fire, the destroying and purifying element, symbol of destruction or (more correctly) involution (*samhara*) and of salvation and deliverance.

The left lower hand hanging down (*dola kara*) pointing to the raised foot as the sole refuge of the soul; symbol of his grace. (*anugraha*).

One leg (*sthita pada*) rests on a prone asura or Titan (called variously Muyalaka, Apasmara, Roga-purusha) holding a snake in

These five activities as separably considered are those of Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Maheswara and Sadasiva respectively, and when all these varied activities are blending into one in his dance, the Dance is *Ananda Tandava*—the Dance of Bliss.

It is also said the figure of Natarja with the *Tiruvasi* illustrates the *Pranava Panchakshara*, the written letters of ந-ம-சி-வா-ய the sacred mantra of the Saivites.

(*Contd.*)
his hand; the other leg is raised and bent (*Kunchitapada*), The former foot is deemed the symbol of Siva's obscuring energy, the latter of his energy of grace and salvation. The prostrate Titan on whom Siva dances was sent against him by the heretic magicians of Darukavana and represents the soul's delusion (*Maya*) crushed under Siva's foot.

"He wears short drawers of tiger-skin, and bells below the knee (*kantamani*) worn by heroes in battle, symbols of nadha (vibration) first stage in evolution and of Siva's might. The whole figure stands on a lotus referred to in connexion with *Kundalini sakti*. Thus the dance represents all the "five-fold acts" of God.

"This symbolism is set forth in the Books of which the following may be taken as a sample and more fully in the oral teaching of the masters.

"Lokanahuya sarvan damarukaninadair ghora samsara, magnan

Datva vittim dayalu pranatabhayaharam kunchita pada padmam

Udhrityedam Vimukterayanam iti karad darsayam pratyayartham

Bibhradvahnim sabhayam kalayati natanam ya sa payan natesah !"

"Who calleth with the sounds of the drum all men sunk in the terrors of worldly life—the Gracious One that giveth knowledge and destroyeth the fears of his worshippers and raising his bent

The origin of this dance and the Ananda Tandava of Nataraja at Tillai has given the inspiration to the dance poses of Nataraja, which are so common in the temple sculptures here, and in the temples in south India.

(*Contd.*)
lotus-foot pointeth with the hand for assurance. "This is the way to Freedom.' and bearing fire danceth in the Hall—may that Lord of the Dance (Natesa) protect us!"—Sir P. Arunachalam—*Studies and Translations* 1937. p. 97-102

Saiva Agamas speak of as many as seven kinds of Tandava of Siva representing His five activities, the *pancha kirtyas*: *Kalika tandava* for Srishti (creation (2-3,) *Gowri tandava* and *Samhara tandava* for the two divisions of *Stithi* preservation-offering protection to remain in bliss always, or preventing from falling into evils (4) *Samhara tandava* for destruction (5) *Tiripura tandava* for *tirobhava* (illusion, veiling); and (6) *Urdhva Tandava* for anugraha (release or salvation and lastly (7) *Ananda Tandava* representing collectively all the above five activities of the deities, Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Mahesvara and Sadasiva.

The well known is the evening or the *Pradosha* dance in the Himalayas, where Siva is said to dance in the twilight in the presence of Parvati in order to relieve the sufferings of Devas and the other creations. *Sivagnana Siddhiyar* explains the purpose to secure "both kinds of fruits (இகம் and பரம்) to the countless souls, our Lord with actions five dances. His dance." *Unmai Vilakkam* says

"மாயை தனையுதறி வல்வினையைச் சுட்டுமலஞ்
சாய வமுக்கிவரு டானெடுத்து—நேயத்தால்
ஆநந்த வாரிதியி லான் மாவைத் தானழுத்தல்
தானெந்தை யார் பாதந் தான்"

Driving away *maya*, burning *Karma*, crushing *anava* by the Holy spirit (*Arul*), raising the soul and sinking it in the ocean of bliss—these are the works of the feet of our father."—P.A.

"the supreme intelligence dances for the purpose of removing our sins. By these means our Lord (Father) scatters the darkness of illusion (*maya*), burns *Karma*, and stamps down evil."

In this dance, Siva is only two handed, and the co-operation of the Gods is implied in their position as Chorus. There is no prostrate asura under Siva's feet.

Tiru-Chitra-Kootam of Govindaraja

Adjacent to Nataraja's sanctum, is "Tiru-Chitra-Kootam" the shrine of Vishnu as Govindaraja. He is seen in divine yogic sleep on the coils of Adisesha-his serpent couch. Govindaraja here admires the divine dance of Nataraja, as he once before did in Tarukavana. The Vishnu was originally installed on an elevated platform in this prakara; his abode is given the names 'Terri-ambalam' also 'Tillait-tiru-chitra-kootam' by the Azhvars.[1] The originator of this sanctum was Pallavamalla Nandivarman II (A.D. 717-782) in the 8th century—a great Vishnu bhakta and builder of Kanchi Vaikunta Perumal temple.

The arathanas to Govindaraja were then conducted by the Tillai Dikshitas. St. Tiru-mangai-azhvar refers to this worship by the Dikshitas as:

"மூவாயிர நான் மறையாளர் முறையால் வணங்க
தேவாதிதேவன் திகழ்கின்ற தில்லைத் திருச்சித்திரக்கூடம்"
பெ. தி. 3.2.6

The Azhvar gives 20 verses to Govindaraja in the *Nalayira Prabhanda* and refers to the consecration of the shrine by a Pallava and of his offerings of fine gold, pearls and precious stones:

"பைம் பொன்னும் முத்தும் மணியுங் கொணர்ந்து
படை மன்னவன் பல்லவர் கோன் பணித்த
தில்லைத் திருச் சித்திரக்கூடம்." —பெ. தி. 3.2.3

St. Kulasekara Azhvar has also sung of Govindaraja in 11 verses and refers to him as:

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[1](1) பல்லவன் மல்லையர் கோன் பணிந்த பரமேச்சுர விண்ணகரம் (2) நந்திமணி செய்த நகர் நந்திபுர விண்ணகரம்
—பெ.தி. 5.10.7

" தில்லைநகர்த் திருச்சித்திர கூடந்தன்னுள்
அந்தணர்கள் ஒரு மூவாயிரவர் ஏத்த
அணிமணி யாசனத் திருந்த அம்மான் "

St. Manickavachakar refers to the position of Nataraja and Govindaraja in their sanctums, remembering evidently the puranic account in *Arunachaleswara mahatmyam.*

" புரங் கடந்தானடி காண்பான் புவிவிண்டு புக்கறியா
கிரங்கி டெந்தா யென்றி ரப்பத் தன்னீரடிக் கென்னி
ரண்டு
கரங்கடந்தா னென்று காட்ட மற்ருங்கதுங் காட்டிடென்று
வரங்கிடந்தான் றில்லையம்பல முன்றிலம் மாயவனே "
—திருக்கோவையார்

The worship of Govindaraja continued till Chola Kulottunga II (A D. 1135-1146), found the place too cramped for all the festivities, and he suggested removal during the extensive renovation of the temple. Pillailokam-Jiyar, the author of the Life of Ramanuja refers to this; and also to Ramanuja's (A. D. 1016-1137) recovering the icon, and consecrating and installing it in Lower Tirupati, where the image is still worshipped.

And in the first half of the 16th century, and at the time of Krishna deva Raya's construction of the Northgopuram, (S. I. I. VII. Ins. 199.) the re-consecration of the Vishnu took place here again in 1539, A.D. by Achyutaraya, the brother of Krishnadevaraya who was inspired by the famous Vaishnava teacher, Doddacharya *alias* mahacharya of Sholinghur. *Prapannamirtham* mentions that this was actually effected by one Ramaraya of Chandragiri-a lieutenant of Achyutha. *Vasudeva Caritai*, another Vaishnava work (1543 A.D.) mentions that "Govindaraja worshipped by the Devas, with Uma's Lord dancing by his side

was restored to his former shrine, and praised by Achyutha in a few verses. The worship was from now on conducted according to Vaikanasa rituals by Vaishnava archakas, with an endowment grant of 500 *pons* which was the income from four villages for the upkeep of daily worship."**

Sriranga Raya VI of the Aravidu dynasty, then ruling in Vellore in A. D. 1643, is next heard of as having further renovated the shrine with the *mukha* mandapam and the gopura of the shrine, and the *vimanas* of the goddesses Pundarikavalli and Soodikkodutta Nachiyar, repaired the big mandapam in front of Govindaraja, also the mandapam in front of Tiruvazhi Azhvan; and given five villages in rent free grant for the upkeep of daily worship and for the benefit of the Sri Vaishnavas of the place. (b)

Krishnappa Kondama Nayaka of Gingee (cir. 1597) is next mentioned, as having repaired the temple, and added to its environments. *Prapannamirtham*

**Ins. 1 of 1915 of Achyutharaya, on the north tier of the central shrine in the Govindaraja perumal temple (unfinished) records the reconsecration of Govindaraja Chitrakuta by Achyutha Raya.

(b) Ins. 272 of 1913 on the south wall of the first-prakara of the Nataraja temple.

Ins. 271 of 1913 on the east wall of the first prakara of the Nataraja temple, of Vijayanagara king Sri Ranga Raya III (1642-80) records that the king repaired the big mandapa in front of the Tillai Govindaraja Swamin shrine in Tiruchitrakootam, the gopura of the shrine the vimanas of the Goddesses Pundarikavalli Nachiar and Soodikoduttha Nachiyar 1643 A. D. and the mandapa in front of Tiruvazhi-azhvan. It is also recorded that he made rent free the five villages of Adur. Karunguli, Kuriamangalam, Madurantanallur, and Udaiyur in which the Sri Vaishnavas were permanently living.

speaks the unfortunate controversy of the time and the work of renovations carried out. (1) The shrine was further enlarged with other sanctums for Lakshmi by Sriranga Raya III in 1643.

Disputes however arose between the Dikshitas and the Archakas, which were from time to time settled in the law courts. The last of such dispute was most fairly and amicably settled through the mediating efforts of Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad. The Rajah also renovated the frontal mandapam of Govindaraja, repaired the *sanctum-sanctorum*, reconstructed the *gopura* and the *vimana* over the *garbhagraha* and reconsecrated the *sannidhi* in the summer of 1934. The happy mediation of the Rajah in clearing all the misunderstandings between priestly classes, restoring peace and amity among them, and his munificent generosity to this shrine are acknowledged on all hands to be an important event in the history of the great Temple.

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(1) The Jesuit writer, Father Pimenta, who was an eye-witness speaks to the incidents; See *Aravidu Dynasty*-Heras-p1533; *A political and cultural History of India III*.—R. Sathyanathier p. 308-309. *Ancient India*.—S. K. Ayyangar. Chap. xii ; Ins 272 of 1913.

Tiruk-kamakottam of Sivakami

The temple of Parvati as Sivakami, referred to in inscriptions as *Tiruk - Kamakotta - Peria - Nachiyar*, is a distinct and magnificent structure ascribed to Chola Kulottunga II. (A.D. 1133-1150). It faces east, in the outer fourth open prakara—Rasakkal Tambiran Tirumaligai Tiruveedhi and located to the west of the Sivaganga tank. It is a unit in itself, with high compound walls, a double pile of porches all around, and a base.—*Tiru-maligiap-padi*-embellished throughout with an admirable panel of sculptures in *alto-relievo* of women dancers in *Lasya*, and musicians playing their diverse instruments in great delight. Similar figures of dance and musicians are seen sculptured in continuous relief all round the base of the thousand—pillared mandapam, the prakara running around the shrine, the frontal mandapam, and the high outer wall of stone have been adden to it later by Naraloka Vira, a devout vassal and chief under Kulottunga III (A.D. 1178—1216) (AA) (Ins. 190 of 07). A golden canopy with superb fringes of bullion" is said to have been added to this temple in the 14th century and is now non-existent. From the top of one of the pillars of the frontal aisle hangs a chain of

AA. எவ்வுலகும் எவ்வுயிரும் ஈன்றும் எழிலழியாச்
செவ்வியாள் கோயில் திருச்சுற்றைப்—பவ்வஞ்சூழ்
எல்லை வட்டந் தன் கோற்கியலவிட்ட வாட்கூத்தன்
தில்லை வட்டத் தேயமைத்தான் சென்று"

—S I. I. IV. p. 33.34

According to Fergusson the shrine "is principally remarkable for its porch, which is of singular elegance. The outer aisles are 6 feet in width, the next 8 feet, but the architect reserved all his power for the central aisle, which measures 21 feet 6 inches in width, making the whole 50 feet or there abouts. In order to roof this without employing stones of such dimensions as would

three small circular movable links cut from out of the same piece of stone. A Freneh author M. Legour de Flaix, makes mention of the existence of a remarkable stone chain in this pagoda, of which each link was 3 feet long, and its entire length was 548 feet ! No trace of the chain remains.

Shrine of Durga

In line with this shrine of Sivakami, a little moved to the north, is the shrine of Durga Parameswari. ([1])

The Pandya Nayakam

Farther on, lies a magnificent temple for Shanmukha known as *Pandya nayakam*. It was built by Maravarman Sundara Pandya (A. D. 1216-1251). The shrine is a majestic mandapam borne on 56 Square pillars, each of which is chiselled, and more elaborately ornamented as in the Nritta sabha. At the sanctum, Shanmukham as Arumukham is six feet in height with six faces, and

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(*Contd.*)

crush the supports, recourse was had to vaulting, or rather bracketing, shafts, and these brackets were again tied together by transverse purlins, all in stone, and the system was continued till the width was reduced to a dimension that could easily be spanned. As the whole is enclosed in a court surrounded by galleries two storeys in height, the effect of the whole is singularly pleasing." Vol. I. p.377.

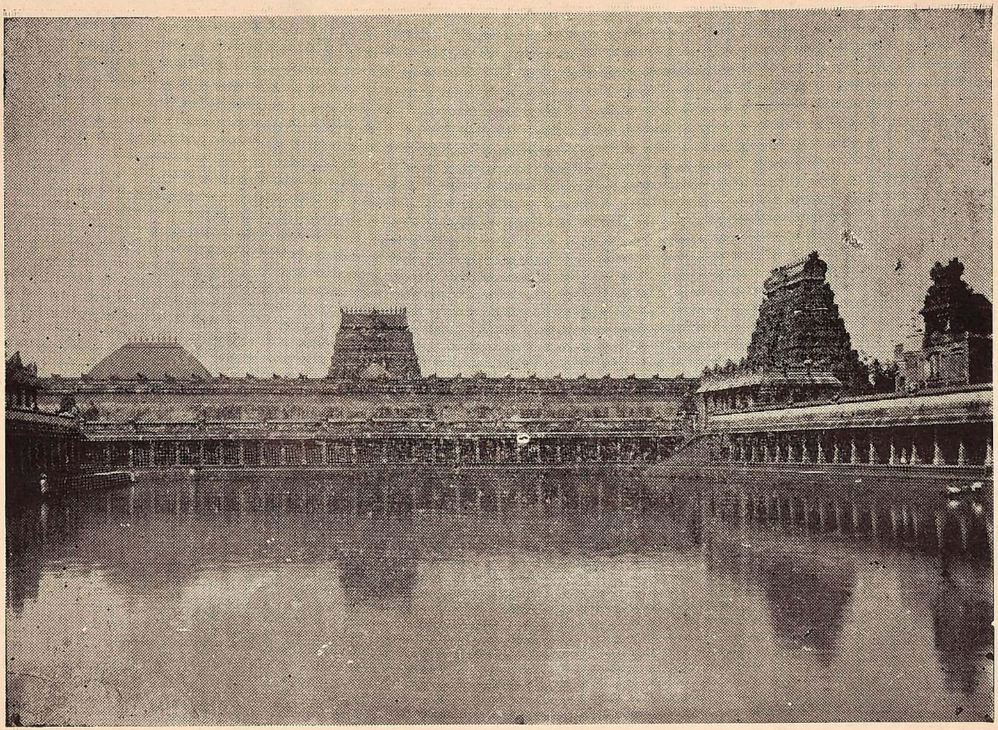
[1]. *Durga*—Etymological signification possibly a protecting Fortress of Defence) against difficulties and ills so that this name would belong to the same class as Ambiga, Siva. and Uma. " She resembles *Minerva*— not the peaceful inventress of the fine and useful arts but *Pallas* armed with a helmet and spear. Both represent heroic virtue or valour united with wisdom. Both slew demons and giants with their own hauds and both protected the wise and virtuous who paid them due adoration,'—Jones: Asiatic Researches. Vol I. p. 252.

seated on a peacock, with his consorts Valli and Deivayanai, on either side in a standing posture. Lord Subrahmanyam as Shanmukham and His consorts in this sanctum, at the extreme western end of this majestic mandapam is a piece of wondrous carving.

The temple was recently renovated in 1930, and the entire roof beautified with exquisite modern painting, depicting scenes from the *Skanda Puranam*, the six and several favourite resorts of Muruga, (ஆறு படை வீடுகள்) as mentioned in the *Tirumurugarruppadai* and several others refered to in *Subrahmanya Parakramam*. These renovations are due to the munificence of a pious resident of Chidambaram, S. Ratnaswami Chettiar of Nataraja Vilas Jewellery Hall—the founder of the Ramakrishna Vidyasala High School in the south west of the town.

The Sivaganga

The Sivaganga tank also known as *Hemapushkarani* is the temple tank, situated along side of the thousand-pillared Raja Sabha. Its original modest extent was added to by the Pallava Hiranyavarman of the 6th century, when he got cured of his fell disease. It is now 275 feet long by 175 feet broad, rivetted on all sides, and with an elaborate flight of stone steps constructed by Naralokavira, and later improved with pillared cloisters all around. Lord Nataraja with the Panchamurtis graces this tank on festive occasions; and its life-giving and sanctified waters give renewed life to the thousands who bathe in it. It is one of the beauty spots in this spacious, temple, and the reflections of the gopuras in its waters, forms an effective picture.



SIVAGANGA

Courtesy :
Archaeological Survey of India

The Hundred-Pillared Mandapam

The mandapam to the west of the Sivaganga tank, is ascribed to Naralokavira, the Chola Cheiftain[1]. His epigraphs number a dozen, and show the best literary qualities of the Chola's imperial *prasastis.* While most of them make it appear that he was a mighty warrior, the Chidambaram inscriptions reveal that he used his position and influence for the service of religion—his most notable contribution to this temple was this hall with a hundred pillars, built by him and named after his master Vikrama Cholan.

On twelve of the pillars of this mandapam, there are inscribed the words " Svasti Sri Vikrama Cholan Tirumandapam." There is besides a loose pillar with the inscription " Akalangan". (a)

" மல்லற் குலவரையா னூற்றுக்கான் மண்டபத்தைத்
தில்லைப் பிரானுக்குச் செய்தமைத்தான்—கொல்லம்
அழிவு கண்டான் சோனளப்பரிய வாற்றற்
கழிவு கண்டான் றொண்டையர் ரேறு" —Ins. 120/1888.

Near by, is a shrine to Meenakshi Sundareswarar within a prakara, and a compound.

Tirut-tondat-tokai-Eswaram

Almost opposite to the Pandya Nayakam, in this great court-yard,*Tirut-tondat-tokai-eachvaram*-the Navalinga shrine. It has been repaired ; and wherein, are

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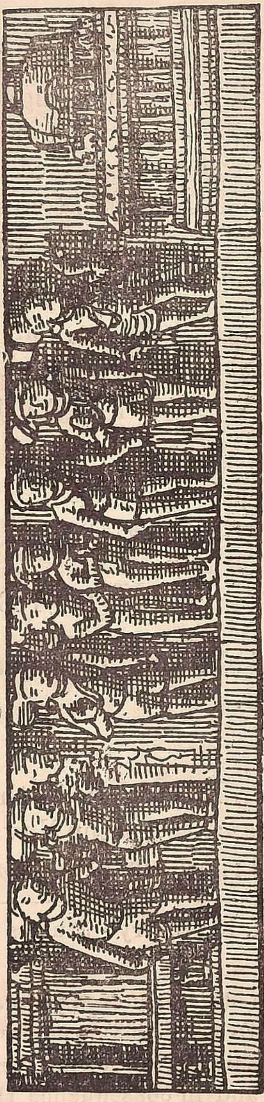
1. A. R. E. 1922—p. 115—also K. A. N. Sastry - Studies in Chola History and administration.

(a) Ins. 616/1929-30 mentions that in this Hundred pillared mandapam, Jatavarman Vira Pandya, (A.D- 1253-1268), a contemporary Pandya with Maravarman Kulasekhara performed his *Vira-abisheka* and *Vijayabhisheka* in 1267 A. D. and in consequence the mantapa was known thereater as *Vira-Pandyan Tiru mandapam.*

installed nine Sivalingas of considerable dimensions, each Sivalinga representing one of the (தொகை அடியார்கள்) collective Nayanmars, not mentioned by their special attributes, viz., Pattaraip-panivar, Paramanaye-Paduvar, Sittattai-Sivan-pal-vaippar, Muzhu-neeru-poosiya-Munivar, Appalum-adicharn-dhar, "Poyyadi mai illada pulavar : the poets whose homage to god was flawless", Tillai-vazh-andhanar as St. Sundarar mentions them in *Tirut-tondat-tokai*. As each of these cannot be given a name and a form, they are represented collectively as Siva-lingas. There is a sanctum for the Navagrahas, besides, within the shrine, which, together with the name of the shrine



Poyyadimai illatha Pulavar*

* By courtesy of the Epigraphist to the Gov't of India. The north, west and south walls of the central shrine of the temple at Darasuram contain a belt of Sculptures–number of them bearing labels in characters belonging roughly to the 13th century—They are scenic representations from the lives of Nayan mars, as related in the Periyapuranam. cf A. R. E. 1908. para 65 & 66 also 1920.

go to strengthen the above view. Another account of this, is that these nine Lingas are the objects of worship by the nine planets for bringing health and blessings to themselves and their devotees.

The Temple administration and the Three Thousand Dikshitas.

The Three Thousand Dikshitas consider themselves consecrated to the worship of Lord Nataraja.[1] From olden days they are known collectivly as the Tillai-Moovayiravar. They claim that it is their privilege to worship Him. Nobody else can take part in the worship. The main shrines as well as the minor shrines are exclusively their own. They have no work other than worship of Lord Nataraja. They form an institution by themselves. They are now about 200 in number, for purpose of worship, each unit being a man and woman in holy wedlock. Un-married men are not eligible nor are widowers. They never live out side of Chidambaram, nor can they take a wife from out of Chidambaram or from out of their own fold.

The corporate body of Dikshitas (*Podhu-dikshithas*) have been the hereditary trustees of the temple. The trustee-ship is in-alienable, and inheres in every member of the community from birth, both fathers and sons having equal rights.

1. *Arathana* to Nataraja and minor deities consist of *Pal-Neivedyam* (offering of Milk) at 6 a. m. and performed six times during the day at 8. 10 and 12 a. m. at midday, and in the evenings at 6, 8 and 10 p. m.

The principal Kattalais for the daily worship are from the estates of Pachaiappa Mudaliar, the V. S. Estate, Rajah Tondaiman of Puducottah, Dharmapuram adheenam, Mugaiyur Subramanya Pillai, Rajah Sir M. Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad and others.

The system of management of the temple is unique. Given previous verbal intimation by a common man, the Dikshithas meet periodically to transact the administrative business in the Deva Sabha. There are elaborate rules for effecting proper management of funds. Every Dikshita has a vote and voice in the management. All personal relations and private differences are set aside, when they meet to discuss questions relating to the management of the temple. They are decided by a vote of the majority—the veto of any one single member being sufficient to prevent the execution of any business. The resolutions of the community are recorded in regular books, and are strictly followed. Delinquents are fined or suspended by resolutions passed at the meetings.

The daily rituals followed in this temple are Vydika as different from Agamic followed in every other temple in South India. The daily (arathana) worship and the festivals are conducted by the priests with occasional or periodic contributions by devotees. The offerings are divided among the Dikshithas in the temple. The right of collecting them on particular festival days is given to a batch of twenty Dikshithas at a time, who are on duty for twenty days at a time. They have also the charge of the keys of the respective shrines within the temple, known as the 'Five-Koyils; and the custody of the jewels and other valuable articles in those shrines is with them; they are examined once in every four days by their representatives and they guard the temple during nights. In this manner, the right goes round to all the members during the year. The key of the common treasury room is with twenty persons, who are known as the "turn men".

The temple has no landed property, nor does it receive from the Government any *Mohini* or *Tasdic* allowance. Though landed endowments by Hindu kings are mentioned in inscriptions in the name of the deity there is no property which has survived during the many political upheavals the country has passed through.

The right to collect offerings during festivals is leased out to individual Dikshithas, and they are accountable for them to the whole body of Dikshithas. It is a perfect democracy that has worked successfully through several centuries.

The Temple Festivals

Nine periodical festivals to Nataraja are referred to in the temple inscriptions and the '*Koyir Puranam*'. The ஆனித் திருமஞ்சனத் திருநாள் in June-July and மார்கழி திருவாதிரைத் திருநாள் in December-January each year are celebrated to this day, with as much elaborateness and grandeur, as they were performed of old, even prior to Kopperunjinga I (1) (A.D. 1232-43) who instituted in his time several other festivals in addition to the earlier ones.

Two abishekas or Tirumanjanams* are given to Lord Nataraja and goddess Sivakami in the thousand pillared mandapam before concluding both the festi vals. They are the most attended. Then, as They return to the chit Sabha, They bestow on the devotees the Darsan.

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(1) S.I.I. IV. 223

*Four other Tirunmanjanams are also given to Lord Nataraja and Sivakami, during the year in the Kanaka Sabha. They are on chittrai Tiruvonam, and Avani, Purattasi and Masi chathurthasis. They are elaborate abishekas and attract a very large gathering of devotees to witness them,

"These Darsanams are indeed a sight to see, this mass of Humanity with uplifted hands, and tear streaming eyes, and we have thought in our inmost thoughts, whether it was not possible, when all this gorgeous material Universe is evolved from Mind and Will whether the united and devoted hearts of millions ef mankind cannot be powerful enough to animate this Presence by itself, and by reflection induce the same devotion and Love in other hearts who look up to It."

Another important festival is of ten days for Subrahmanya concluding on the Panguni Uttiram day. In the Masi festival in March known as *Tirut-tondat-toka vinnappam*, the recital of the Tevaram hymns before the deity form the prime feature—The Aippasi Pooram Vizha (2) which comes on the *Masi* full moon day is known as கடலாட்டு விழா as the goddess is taken to the sea-shore in festive procession, also as திருப்புதியது விழா and திருப்புடவை யீடு விழா, (3) on account of the new apparel worn by the goddess, also as திருப்பாலி வளர் திருநாள் as the goddess is clad in white and taken out with sprouts of நவ தானிய முளை. This is a celebration for ten days for the Goddess Sivakami. (4). In the Vasantham festival, the deities are taken out in procession to the Kulottungan Tope. (Ibid IV. p. 43) The inscription mentions the purpose of the festival as "திருக்கண் சாத்தும் திருநாளும், பெருமான் பரிவார நாயன்மார்களுக்கு திருவருள் நோக்கம் செய்யும் திருநாளும்".

Yet another is mentioned as "எதிரிலி சோழன் சிவபாத சேகரன் சித்தத்துணைப் பெருமாள் விழா"—possibly in memory of the Cholas' ancestors from Rajaraja I to Kulottunga I. The largest significance is seen marked for பெரிய தைப்பூச விழா on the fullmoon day in *Thai*

(2) Ins 360/1913 (3) Ins 269/1913

(4) S.I.I. IV. p. 43.

(January each year) immediately after harvest when the first offerings are most willingly offered. It is also on this day that the response of Lord Nataraja to the devout Sts Vyaghrapada and Patanjali is commemorated. On this day, huge *pavadai* food offerings (5) are made to the Lord, for participation by all the devotees that may come in for worship, and for which ample provision is made.

The festivals are mostly in service of the common people for giving them cloth, and food and the like in the name of God, when the God is taken to particular places, where He is songht to bestow His blessings and sanctify the offerings. These give also the public an opportunity to view the Lord at leisure, and to follow His procession.

(5) Ins 106/1936; 507/1935.

Royal Patronage and Saiva Revival

Saivism had its halcyon days even before the beginning of historical times in South India. It began to decline from 250 to 550 A. D. under the Kalabhra rule (வடுக கருநாடர்): the kings were Buddhists and the land followed. *Tamil Navalar Charithai* says that Achyutha Kalappalan, a Kalabhra king had the Chola, Pandya Chera Kings in captivity in his palace at Tillai. The deliverance came about the close of the 6th century, with the break up of the Kalabhras and their disappearance.

The Pallavas

Very little is known of the times from now on to the middle of the 6th century, when the Pallavas came into prominence. *Koyir Puranam* has it that the historical beginning of the temple, began with Simhavarman II (A.D. 550-575), who worshipped the *moolasthanam Sivalingam* in the Tillai forest, and the King constructed the earliest structure for the God, and instituted several festivals.

"பொன்னணி மாதவ மாமணியாதி பொருப்பாக
முன்னர் கொணர்ந்து குவித்தருள் பெற்ற முனிச் செல்வன்
றன்னிசை வோடுயர் வானவர் கம்மியர் தம்மைக் கொண்
டுன்னரு மம்பலமொன்று சமைத்தணி யொப்பித்து"

—திருவிழாச் சுருக்கம், கோயிற் புராணம்

Kochengannan*

The start came from the chola Land, with *Kochengannan*. The chola constructed as many as seventy temples to Lord Siva. Tevaram speaks of him as well Azhvar Tirumangaimannan who refers to it as "எண் தோள் ஈசற்கு எழில் மாடம் எழுவது செய்து உலகம் ஆண்ட செங்கட் சோழன்". St Sundarar had cononised him for such devout acts as one of the sixty-three Saiva saints.

The rising tide of Saivism came about this time synchronising with the advent of Lord Nataraja into the temple. It was a momentous event in the history of Saivism, and Chidambaram became at once the centre of Saivite religious life. The tide was now on, and, it was accelerated by the appearance of its four apostles: the *Samayacharyas*, Sts. Appar,** Jnana sambandar, Sundarar and Manikkavachakar. St. Tirunavukkarasar came from Tiruvamur of Tirumunainadu and St. Jnanasambanda from Shiyali of Cholamandalam.

Tondaimandalam under the Pallava Mahendravarman and the Pandya kingdom under Pandya-Ninrasir-nedumaran professed Jainism.

** *Tirunavukkarasu*(king of sacred diction) or Appar (Father) as he was addressed by St. Jnanasambandar, came of an ancient Saiva family. While young, he lost both his parents and was left with his only devoted sister. His earlier affinities for a study of Jainism took him to Patalipuram, the modern Tirupatirippuliyur — Cuddalore N. T. and which soon pushed him to celebrity, as. *Dharmasena*. His secession from their ancestral faith pained his sister Tilakavathiar and she prayed to Lord Siva to restore him

* (*Courtesy* : Archaeological Survey of India)

St Tirunavukkarasar (Appar) was well advanced in years, when his youthful contemporary Jnanasambanda, the inspired child, joined him in their mission.

(*Contd.*)

back to her. Her prayers were heard. Tirunavukkarasu was affected by a painful colic which none of the Jains could alleviate. He remembered his sister and went to her in Tiruvadigai. Tilaka vathiar was glad to welcome her brother back. She administered to him the sacred Viboodi to wear, and took him to the presence of the Lord in the temple. He prostrated and worshipped, and the spirit coming on him, broke out with the first of the *Garland of praises* of the Lord in "*Tevaram*"

"கூற்ரு யினவாறு விலக்ககிலீர் கொடுமை
பல செய்தனன் நானறியேன்

ஏற்ருயடிக்கே யிரவும் பகலும் பிரியாது
வணங்குவ னெப்பொழுதும்

தோற்ரு தென்வயிற் றினகம்படியே குடரோடு
துடக்கி முடக்கியிட

யாற்றே னடியேனதிகைக் கெடில வீரட்டானத்
துறை யம்மானே."

"Deign to remove the mortal ills, unwittingly have
I committed ever so many sins,

Day and night have I ever prayed incessantly to thee,
My bowels are turned and my belly aches, O God!
O my Lord of Adigai Virattanam! Endure I cannot".

The pain abated and soon completely left him. Appar was reclaimed, and he remained at Tiruvadigai doing service at the temple.

Pallava Mahendra Varman I, and the high dignitaries of Jainism could not suffer a renegade from their ranks and faith. Tirunavukkarasu was summoned before the King and was subjected to certain cruel tests : those of poison, of being placed in a burning lime kiln, of being trodded down by a furious elephant and being thrown into the sea tied down to a huge stone. From all of them, he survived by His grace. The result was, Mahendravarman himself turned an ardent Saivite and the land was reclaimed. The

St. Appar visited Chidambarm twice in his life time. He mentions the place as *Tillaimanagar*, *Ponnambalam* and *Perumbarrappuliyur* with "mansions and palaces, ringing with the sound of Vedic chants and sacrificial fires". The Lord of the Dance graced him with a welcome, the beatific vision of which he refers to in

"குனித்த புருவமுங் கொவ்வைச் செவ்வாயிற் குமிண் சிரிப்பும்
பனித்த சடையுங் பவளம் போல் மேனியிற் பால் வெண்ணீறும்
இனித்த முடைய எடுத்த பொற் பாதமுங் காணப் பெற்ருல்
மனித்தப் பிறவியும் வேண்டுவதே யிந்த மாநிலத்தே."

ecstasy, as indicated in the words (1) "என்று வந்தாய் என்னும் எம்பெருமான்றன் திருக்குறிப்பே." St. Appar afraid to walk on foot the sacred precincts of Chidambaram, rolled himself on the ground all the way to His *sanctum* and back. His utterance is expressive of his profound reverence and devotion to the Lord of the Chit Sabha.

"தரித்த மனத்தவர் வாழ்கின்ற தில்லேச் சிற்றம்பலவன்
சிரித்த முகங்கண்ட கண்கொண்டு மற்றினிக் காண்ப
தென்னே ?"

(*Contd.*)

Pallava, therafter, carved many a rock cut temple to Siva, as at Tiruchirappalli rock, Mandagappattu; rebuilt the temple at Tiruvadigai and many others in the land.

Tiru-navuk-karasu was now free, and he went about the land worshipping at shrines and pouring out his heart's praises of the Lord. These outpourings and the miracles he performed were the beginning of the awakening of Saivism.

St. Jnanasambandar

The wonders of St Jnanasambandar's history begin with his third year. One day he had accompanied his human father to the temple to perform his duties, and he left the little boy on the steps of the tank while he performed the ceremonies and took the bath. When the father had been down into the water, the child missing him, tottered back to the temple and cried 'O' father O' mother" The God heard the feeble words, came down to

St. Jnanasambanda and Tillai.

The divine child Jnanasambanda worshipped the Lord of Tillai thrice. His first *darsan* was, when he was carried on the shoulders of his father, Sivapada hiruthayar. Sekkizhar describes the *darsan* as if he once again tasted the blessed milk of *gnana* from out of Uma-Parvati's hands.

His first verse of invocation to the deity at Tillai begins with praise for the flawless religious and ritualistic life of the Dikshithas and their unswerving loyalty to the rituals of *homa*.

The young saint was accompanied by St. Tiruneelakanta Yazhpanar, who set Sambandar's verses to instrumental music as he uttered them. They had a large following going from shrine to shrine, singing the Lord's praises in sweet strains. The fame of the miraculous endowments of the wonderful child spread throughont the whole land. The Pandiya nadu was still jain. And soon a deputation came to him from Mangayarkarasiyar-the Pandya Queen and Prime Minister Kulach-

Tiruneelakanta-perumbanar*

(*Contd.*)

the Child and bade Uma give him some milk from her breast in a golden cup. This the Goddess did, and—as She is the manifested energy of Sivan's transcendal Being—the Sakti, fountain and source of action, grace and knowledge, mingled supernal wisdom with the draught, wiped away his tears, and with soothing words gave him the cup. The child drank of it and became at once an inspired sage—absolutely and for ever consecrated to Siva—in consequence of which he received the epithet of *Aludaiya Pillaiyar*—the God's own child-and Tiru-Jnanasambandar-he who is conjoined with divine wisdom—

* (*Courtesy:* Archaeological Survey of India)

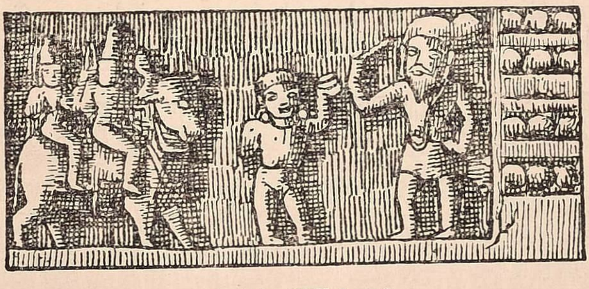
chiraiyar, who invited him to the Pandyan capital, to convert the land back toSaivism. St. Jnanasambandar went, cured the Pandya of his fever, and won many contests which the Jain high priests set for him. The result was that the Pandya and his land were re-converted to Saivism.

Young Jnanasambandar held Chidambaram so sacred that he camped at Tiruvetkalam, whenever he visited the shrine for worship of Lord Nataraja. This

(*Contd.*)

Meanwhile, the father having finished his ablution. came up out of the tank, perceived the child with radiant face and lips bearing traces of the food of which he had partaken.

"Who has polluted you, asked he, with impure food" and threatened to beat the child, who with sobs pointed up to where in



Aludaiya Pillaiyar*

firmament he saw the receding form of the God and Goddess; and for answer burst into a sacred lyric still extant of praise.

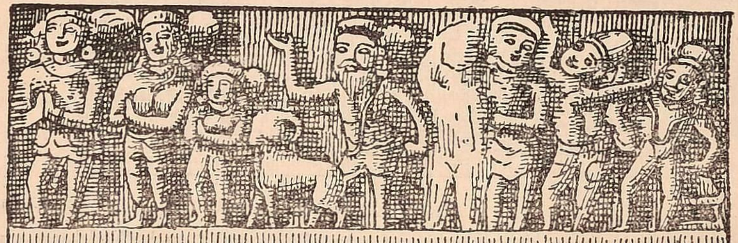
"தோடுடைய செவியன் விடையேறியோர் தூவெண் மதிசூடி
காடுடைய சுடலைப் பொடிபூசி என்னுள்ளங்கவர் கள்வன்
ஏடுடைய மலரான் முனைநாட் பணிந்தேத்த அருள் செய்த
பீடுடைய பிரமா புரமேவிய பெம்மான் இவனன்றே."

The father could not see the vision but recogniged its reality; and with ecstacies of gladness embraced the child, who continued to sing the wondrous hymn. From that time he lisped in numbers and his father carried him, as a prodigy from shrine to shrine where he sang at each, appropriate strings of praise.

* (*Courtesy :* Archaeological Survey of India)

fact and the natural facilities available here have been responsible for Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar's choosing this site. The association of Jnanasambandar has been held by the founder and his family to be reponsible for the unique growth, the institution in these twenty-five years.

St. Jnanasambandar lived to his 16th year, and St. Sundarar refers to him in *Tevaram* as "நாளும் இன்னிசையால் தமிழ் பரப்பும் ஞானசம்பந்தன்"-the saint who spread Tamil and Saivism with his sweet strains day after day as he went from one shrine to another. 110 of such shrines are mentioned and that at Nallur-Perumanam-Achalpuram, four miles from coleroon railway station, the saint and his bride, and all that attended for their wedding were gathered to the feet of Lord Sivam, enveloped in a mighty effulgence of light.



Udaiyanambi elundarulugirar*

St. Sundarar of Tirunavalur came later in the 8th century and continued the labours of Sts. Appar and Jnanasambanda in reviving Saivism. He was born of a family of saiva devotees, his father was Sadaiyanar and his mother Isai-gnaniar a most virtuous and saintly woman. Both of them stand canonised as saints. His sweet strains moved the people to piety. It is said, Siva

* (*Courtesy* : Archaeological Survey of India)

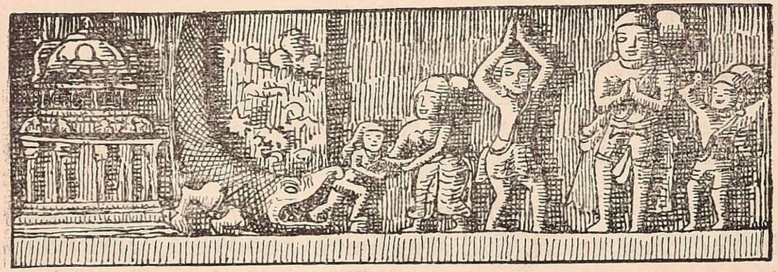
was pleased with Sundarar's hymns in Kailas, that He bade him go forth and while on earth sing"my" praises in ever loving and lovely song, and' "song shall be thy worship". His approach to Lord Siva was one of தோழமை campanionship, as several incidents in the saint's life bear testimony to this aspect. Sundarar refers to Lord Nataraja as புலியூர் சிற்றம் பலத் தெம்பெருமான்,and St.Sekkizhar mentions how he was enraptured at sight of Him at Ponnambalam.

" ஐந்துபே ரறிவும் கண்களே கொள்ள அளப்பரும் கரணங்கள் நான்கும்
சிந்தையே ஆகக் குணமொரு மூன்றும் திருந்து சாத்துவிகமே ஆக
இந்துவாழ் சடையான் ஆடும் ஆனந்த எல்லையில் தனிப்பெருங் கூத்தின்
வந்தபேரின்ப வெள்ளத்துள் திளைத்து மாறிலா மகிழ்ச்சி யின்மலர்ந்தார் "

Once in Tillai, it so happened, that this baktha in the East coast, and another in the West, were pouring forth their praises of Him at the same time.

St. Sundarar was on his last visit to his friend Ceraman and on his way at Avinashi, he heard the sounds of rejoicing proceeding from one house and of mourning from the opposite one. On enquiring the reason he was told that in the house of mourning a boy of five years of age had gone to bathe in the temple tank with anoher boy about his own age; and that one of those boys had been swallowed by a crocadile while the other had escaped. The mourning in the one house was for the ckild carried away in such a terrible manner, while the rejoicing in the other house was for the child that had returned safe, whom they were investing with the sacred thread ! - The saint was filled with compassion for the monrners who came crowding to worship at his feet, imploring him to accept their hospitality. St Sundarar took them to the temple tank and sang one of his sacred lyrics praying that the child might be restored. As he was singing the tank which was then dry soon filled with water, and the dreaded king of Death brought back the spirit of the child, reunited it to the body and caused the crocadile to bring the child thus rescued to the bank. This wonderful resurrection filled the whole country with wonder and the land rang with the praises of this miracle.

Ceraman was the other baktha. In token of the Lord's appreciation, a tinkling of His anklets was heard by him everyday, but the Lord was so entranced that day, by the praises of baktha Sundarar, that the anklets did not sound as usual to Ceraman. Ceraman took it amiss, and was about to sacrifice himself, when the Lord rushed to tell him the truth. Thus, the two *bakthas* got to know each other and their friendship grew.



Avinasiyandar—Mudalaivayppillai*

Ceraman soon met Sundarar at Chidambaram, and the latter visited Ceraman's capital thrice; and on the last occasion, Sundarar was bodily summoned to Kailas by Lord Siva, and Ceraman followed Sundarar and both entered the presence of Lord Siva and were taken to His feet.

Seraman - Perumal Kadai*

Sundarar's hymns and his several miracles captivated Tamilakam. The saint is specially remembered for the *Tirut-tondat-tokai*, sung by him at Tiruvarur. It is a decad of verses naming for the first time, the

* (*Courtesy* : Archaeological Survey of India)

sixty-three Saiva saints before him, each by his name and special attributes.

With the advent of Sts. Appar, * Sambandar and Sundarar, the Saiva revival was almost complete; and its final phase was yet to come with the re-vivification of the faith by St. Manickavachakar.

St. Manickavachakar *came from Tiruvadavur of Pandinadu. As prime minister of Arimardhana Pandya he had risen to the height of power and elevated by the Pandya as "Tennavan Brahmarayan". But, he was soon drawn away by the abounding grace of Siva, and initiated by Himself at Tirupperunturai. The king soon perceived that his minister was a man of God, and relieved him of his duties. The saint started out from Madurai, visiting Tirupperun-turai (Avudayar-koil), ** Uttara-kosamangai, Tirukkalukkundram, Tiruvarur, Tiruvannamalai, Shiyali and other places, giving out in song his spiritual experiences. At last, while in retirement in Pichavaram, to the east of the present University site, also at Timpparkadal mutt where there is now a shrine for திருப்பெருந்துறை பரம சாமிகள்; the call came to him to meet the aggressive disputations of the Buddhist emissaries who had come from Ceylon headed by the Ceylonese King.

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* "Few of the world's biographies are more interesting than that of this man of rare genius; who, in his early youth when he was the favourite and chief minister of the great king of Madura, met with and was converted by a Saiva Guru whom he then and always believed to be Siva himself, and became at once an utterly self-renouncing ascetic and Saiva mendicant; continuing instant in labours, patient in suffering, and constant in denial through the many years of his after life."—G.U.Pope.

Also see Paranjoti munivar and Vembatturar's *Tiruvilaiyadals.* and *Tiruvadavurur adigal Puranam*, by Kadavulmamunivar.

** a celebrated temple associated with the Saint's spiritual history.

Saint Manickavachakar answered their arguments, yet they would not be convinced. The saint tried all his arguments in vain; and turned to Siva to see his disputants struck dumb. The King pleaded that his dumb daughter should be made to speak. Acting on the suggestion, and to the wonder of the audience, the daughter spoke. The Buddhists were convinced. This incident is related in the saint's own words in " திருச்சாழல் "*

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* Its spiritual significance is the Sport of Civan's gracious energy.—சிவனுடைய காருணியம். சாழல் is the name of a sp or by girls. In each verse the former couplet sung by the leader proposes some mystery regarding Sivan, to which the latter couplet s a reply, the objection is put into the mouth of the Buddhist Guru and the reply by the Ceylon King's, hitherto dumb daughter.

பூசுவதும் வெண்ணீறு பூண்பதும் பொங்கரவம்
பேசுவதுந் திருவாயான் மறைபோலுங், காண், ஏடி
பூசுவதும், பேசுவதும், பூண்பதுங், கொண்டென்னை
ஈசன் அவன், எவ்வுயிர்க்கும் இயல்பானுன்—சாழலோ!

"What He smears is 'White ash'; what He wears is an angry snake; what He speaks with His lips divine is the mystic word, it seems; my Dear! What He, smears, what He says, what He wears are the means by which He, As my Lord, rules me! and of all that hath life the Essence is He.' Caralo!"

" என்னப்பன் எம்பிரான் எல்லார்க்குந் தான் ஈசன்
துன்னம்பெய் கோவணமாக் கொள்ளும் அது ஏன், ஏடி
மன்னுகலை துன்னு பொருண் மறைநான்கே வான்சரடாத்
தன்னையே கோவணமாச் சாத்தினன் காண், சாழலோ—

My father, Embiran, to all indeed is Ruler Supreme;
Yet he wears a clouted *Kovanam* and why should this be;
my Dear! The Vedas four, the meaning with which
all lore is fraught,
as the great thread Himself alone as *Kovanam*
He spreads ; behold ! Carolo !

An ascetic mendicant wears a very scanty cloth suspended by a string round the waist; but why should He, who often appears in such stately majesty, wear this unseemly pretence of decent clothing? The answer—seems to say 'All mysteries are contained

The spiritual urge he experienced is given expression to in கண்டபத்து as he saw the Lord's Dance of Bliss. He refers to Tillai as அனைத்துலகும் தொழும் தில்லை, and what he experienced was "அந்தமிலா ஆனந்தம், and தித்திக்கும் இன்பம்"

Of *Tiruvachakam*, his "Sacred Utterances", 25 of the 51 of the lyrics in the work are in praise of the Lord of Tillai and of author's spiritual experiences. The prominence given by the saint to Tillai and its Lord had evoked the popular saying' "தில்லை பாதி திருவாசகத்தில்". And, another "சிதம்பரத்தில் பிறந்த பிள்ளைக்கு திருவெம்பாவை கற்றுக் கொடுக்க வேண்டுமா?" speaks to the popularity of the *Tiruvembavai* verses found in every body's lips in Chidambaram in the month of Margazhi. It purports to be sung by maidens, as they gathered together one by one, for an early bath at the tank, be-spangled with *Kuvalai* and lotuses. After bath, they formed an image of Parvati out of sand, for worship, and prayed for boons to themselves and general prosperity for all.

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and hidden in Him, and the Vedic revelation is the link between Him and the soul of men."

"அம்பலத்தே கூத்தாடி அமுது செயப் பலிதிரியும்
நம்பனையுந் தேவன் என்று நண்ணுமது, ஏன், ஏடி ?
நம்பனையும் ஆம் ஆகே ஞன்மறை கடாம் அறியா
எம்பெருமான் ஈசா என் றேத்தின, காண் சாழலோ" —18

In the sacred Hall He dances, and wanders abroad to beg for alms;
This homeless mendicant shall we approach as god? How so, my Dear,
Hear thou the nature of this sacred mendicant! Him Vedas four know not;
But they've invok'd Him Lord and Isan, praising loud; behold, Caralo'.

Tiruvachakam Translation by Dr. G. U. Pope.

7

The saint's conception of Siva, was of Siva and Sakti, as one and indivisible, and he would address his appeals to Him through young maidens, and kindred media as in குயிற்பத்து, the Cockoo; in திருத்த சாங்கம், the Parrot; in திருக்கோத்தும்பி, the Dragon fly; as he felt the divine perception of the supreme was keener through those objects. திருவம்மானை was sung as he saw the maidens playing அம்மானை and the songs of their lips singing the Lord's praise and played திருபொற் சுண்ணம் as they pounded a golden coloured dust of sweet herbs for the Lords' use; திருத்தெள்ளேணம், as they leaped about in a kind of play touching each others shoulders; திருச்சாழல் as one girl queried and another answered her in turn; திருப்பூவல்லி as they plucked flowers for the Lord's worship and திருப் பொன்னூசல் as they sported on a swing under a shady bower.

His words carried a special appeal to the Lord of Tillai, and, it is said that one day an aged Brahman appeared before him and wished to take down all that he had sung. This he consented to, and when completed the aged one requested the saint to compose a work in கோவை theme on திருச்சிற்றம்பலமுடையார், which he forthwith commenced; and, this was also faithfully taken down as sung- As the work concluded, it is said, the scribe suddenly vanished, and Manikkavachakar realised that the aged one was none other than the Lord of the Dance! On the next day the Dikshithas opened the *sanctum* of Lord Nataraja for the morning pooja; and saw underneath His seat, in Ponnambalam, the cadjan script of *Tiruvachakam* and *Tirukkovaiyar* and signed in the scribe's own hand "மணிவாசகன் சொல்ல அழகிய திருச்சிற்றம்பலமுடையார் எழுதியது". They now knew who it was that wrote down the two works as the

author sang. This great event was fittingly celebrated. The saint when questioned as to what those two works signified could answer nothing, but make his obeisance to the Lord and point to Him as the meaning of all, and then he too vanished in a halo of light. *Tiru-Chittrambalak-Kovaiyar* as the second work was named-is a subjective poem of praise of the Lord in *Ahat-turai* environments, the author professing himself-as the heroine in love with her Hero-the Lord of Tilai.*

With the awakening of Saivism in the land, temples sprang up in every village. Such of the temples as were visited and sung by the Samayacharyas in their itineraries were considered more sanctified and known on that account as *Padalperra Stalangal*-They number two hundred and seventy four.

*a "சொற்கோவுந் தோணிபுரத் தோன்றலுமென் சுந்தரனுஞ்
சிற்கோல வாதவூர்த் தேசிகரும்—முற்கோலி
வந்திலரேல் நீறெங்கே மாமறைநூ லெங்கே
எந்தை பிரா னஞ்செழுத் தெங்கே."

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* "A psychological treatise on the subjective mind, the soul as the maid in distress, looking up to God, her only deliverer and deliverance as her inseparable union with her Lord, and the enjoyment of ever lassting bliss: Its sublime import is given in the verse;

"ஆரணங்காண் என்பர் அந்தணர் யோகிக ளாகமத்தின்:
காரணங்கா ணென்பர் காமுகர் காமநன் னூலிதென்பர்
ஏரணங்கா ணென்ப ரெண்ண ரெழுத்தென்ப ரின்புலவோர்
சீரணங்காய சிற்றம்பலக் கோவையைச் செப்பிடினே."

The Nayanmars of Tillai

The Saiva Nayanmars are sixty-three. Four of them associated with Chidambaram deserve special mention here. St. Sundarar has canonised St. Nanda in his *Tirut-tondat-tokai* as having attained his beatification at the sanctum of Lord Nataraja. St. Sundarar rcfers to him as செம்மையே திருநாளைப் போவார் in his decad on Tirup-pun-kur, along with the names of others that went before him; Nambi-andar-Nambi refers him in his திருத்தொண்டர் திருவந்தாதி. Sekkizhar gives for the first time, the saints' proper name as "Nandan" in his *Tirut-tondar-puranam.**

Tirunalaippovar*

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* A popular poetic account நந்தனார் கீர்த்தனை of this Saint by Gopala Krishna Bharati of the 19th century is colourful. Done to catch popular fancy it says that Nandan was a helot attached to the soil of his brahmin land-lord who would not permit him to go to Chidambaram. His plaintive request is given in most expressive terms.

> "பாம்பும் புலியும் மெய்ப்பாடு பட்டுத் தேடிப் பார்த்துப்
> பயிரிட்டது
> பார் அளந்த திருமாலும் வேதனும் பார்த்துக்களித்த துண்டு
> பார்வதி என்றொரு சீமாட்டி அதில் பாதியைத் தின்றதுண்டு
> பாதி யிருக்குது பறையா நீயும் போய்ப் பாரென்றுத் தாரம்
> தாரும்".

He at last yielded- on the Lord performing for him a miracle; by which ffelds which ought to be ready for harvesting three months hence were ready overnight and Nandan was given the permission, and he attained bliss at the holy sanctum of Nataraja !

* *Courtesy :* Archaeological Survey of India

Nandan came from Adhanur in the Tanjavur district. He was a watch man of the village. He was pious and devoted to Siva; and often-times his devout offerings were leather straps for the temple musical instruments: the drums, and musk for the Lord's worship. He was often found dancing in religious frenzy at the temple gates in ecstasic delight, as he was prevented from entering the temple.

One day, his religious fervour took him to the neighbouring Siva temple at Tiruppunkur. He prayed to the Lord to give him a nearer sight of Him. His prayer was heard. As he was struggling to get a glimpse of the Lord at the innermost sanctum, lo! and behold! He was visible to the baktha's gaze—the Lord having bidden Nandi, right in front of Him to swerve aside, so that bakha Nandan-might have a distinct sight of him. Nandan was beside himself with joy at such a great blessing. (Nandhi still remains in that pose at Tiruppunkur, as any could see even to this day.) The Lord had blessed Nandan, and he became all the more keen on going to Lord Nataraja at Ponnambalam ! He was oftener in ecstacies, singing சிதம்பரம் போகாமல் இருப்பேனோ, ஜன்மத்தை வீணாய்க் கழிப்பேனோ ("Would I waste this birth, without going to Chidambaram!). To all who jested with him as to the date of his going there, his frequent answer was "the next day" and therefore he was called நாளைப் போவான்—"He who would go the next day." Time passed, and the Lord was pleased by the devotee's persistent devotion. One day, Nandan did start on his quest to Chidamb aram. And, as he approached its environs, the Lord in a vision bade the Dikshitas of the temple meet Nandan, and take His beloved bhakta to His presence. Accord-

ingly, the Dikshitas met Nandan in the vicinity of Chidambaram as he came out of a bath in the Homakulam in the southwest of the town, related to him their vision and took him to the presence of the Lord, after a *homa* purification. And, as Nanda gazed devotedly at the Lord, there appeared a flame glowing with radiance, into which Nanda vanished in a halo!

St. Tiruneelakanta Nayanar

Tiruneelakantar, another saint was a native of Chidambaram. He and his wife were patterns of austere simplicity and high-souled devotion. One day it happened that, there arose a small altercation between them, the lady took it seriously and vowed not to touch her husband from that day; nor would she allow him to touch her. This lasted till they grew from youth to old age. One day, a mendicant appeared with a begging bowl in his hand. He deposited it with them. He did not claim it for several years. After a long lapse of time, he returned. Meanwhile the bowl had disappeared. The pair were in a fix. The mendicant insisted on the bowl's return; else they should bathe together in the temple tank and swear that they had no part in the disappearance of the bowl. The pair would not willingly take a bath together. The Tillai Moovayiravar interceded and proposed a compromise between the pair that they should hold the two ends of a stick and bathe simultaneously in the presence of the mendicant. They bathed, and when they came out they were as young as they were before they both took the strange vow, and the mendicant had

disappeared in the meantime. They prayed fervently together, and the Lord answered by giving them *Mukti*, in admiration of their bakti and strict observance of their vow.

Tirup-puleeswara mahatmyam gives an account of this incident. The temple is now known as *Ilamai yakkinar Koil* in consequence of St. Tiruneelakanta Nayanar's beatification. The temple tank bear on its side, a realistic sculptural representation of the incident in *alto-relievo*.

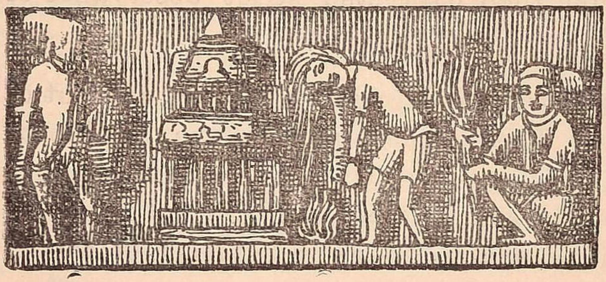
St Kurruva Nayanar, a Kalabhra prince of 6th century was an ardent devotee of Lord Nataraja. His anxiety was, to have himself crowned in this holy shrine, but the Moovayiravar reserved the privilege only to the Chola, the Pandya and the Chera monarchs. And, in terror of him most of the Dikshita

Kurruvanar *

fled to chera Country. But, such was his devotional ardour, that the Lord Himself crowned him King at Chidambaram. He was blessed ever after, being added to the Lord's elect in Sivaloka.

* *Courtesy :* Archaeological Survey of India

St. Kanampullar was another devotee living in Irukkuvelur, a flourishing town on the southern bank of the Vellar. He was of an ancient wealthy family. Not satisfied with material wealth, he yearned for spiritual bliss. Acting on this conviction, he devoted himself to the lighting service in the temple. His wealth wa soon spent. His ardour soon brought him to Chidambaram itself. 'There, he cut grass every day as he knew nothing else and sold the grass and fed the flames with oil. One day he could find no sale for his grass. As he, by then, had grown very old and he had nothing to light the lamps with, he offered his own tuft of hair, instead of the grass to the flames until he melted away in devotion. And the Lord took him to Himself.



Kanampulandar *

* *Courtesy :* Archaeological Survey of India

The Temple and the Imperial Cholas

Temple Inscriptions are the main sources of authentic historical information about everything connected with the temple.* Those noticed in the Annual Epigraphical Reports since 1888 member 271. 71 of them have been edited and published *in-extenso*, in the volumes of the *South Indian Inscriptions*. These offer a vast scope for local history to be studied in greater and greater detail from original sources.

The Imperial Cholas from IX Century and after.

The middle of the 9th century ushered in the line of the Imperial Cholas. The first was a warrior prince, **Vijayalaya** (A.D. 846-880), an ardent devotee of Siva. He and his descendents ruled over the Chola land for the next four centuries (A.D. 846-1279) and lavished great care on the temples.

Their earliest records have been found in the Anantheeswaran temple**. They are fragmentary

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*Of the records found in the temple itself the earliest is that found on a slab of stone built into the outer fourth prakara floor, the Rasakkal Tambiran Tiruveedhi—and ascribed to the fourth year of Aditya I. It records a gift of a perpetual lamp to the Tiru-moolastana-perumanadigal.

Those next in order of date are of the 24th year of Rajendra I and that of the 47th year of Kulottunga I (1117 A.D.) found in the dividing wall between the Kanaka Sabha and the Tiru-moolattaneswara shrine. They give the name to the wall of the innermost enclosure as *Vikrama-Cholan-tirumaligai*, they also mention grants for flower gardens and the like. Most of the epigraphs of Rajaraja I and of his successors until Kulottunga I appear te have been lost.

**Vide S. R. B. in "The Hindu". 8-2-40 and 28-8-40; also Journal of the Annamalai University XIII pp. 88 to 91.

and purport endowments by Vijayalaya and Parantaka (9th and 10th centuries) either for a lamp to the temple or for feeding of certain individuals. Of the rest, the Leyden grant[2] credits Aditya (A.D. 880-907) and his son Parantaka I (A.D. 907-957) with covering the "mansion of Indumauli (Siva) at Vyaghrapura (Chidambaram) with pure gold brought from all the quarters subdued by the prowess of his own arm!"–the Tiruvalankadu plates (S.I.I. III. iii. Verse 53) say that 'this banner of the solar race" (Parantaka), built for Purari (Siva) who was before this on the silver mountain (Kailas) a golden house called (Dabhra Sabha); and this put to shame his (Siva's) friend, the Lord of wealth (Kubera).

Parantaka, a distinguished warrior ruled from Uraiyur for nearly fifty years; his successors were not of equal calibre, and the land suffered a set back, until the greatest of the Imperial line-Rajaraja I (A.D. 985-1013) came on the scene; and the rising tide of Saivism rose with him from strength to strength for the next 250 years.

A very large number of the inscriptions register grants of land, for institution of flower gardens,

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Various inscriptional references are :

[1] Anaimangalam copper plates, Epi. Indi, XXXI, 34, 17 also S.I.I. III. 205 Verse 53.

[2] Leyden grant ll. 35-36 Verse. 17; Vikrama Cholan Ula. Kongudesa Rajakkal: also Gandharaitya's Tiruvisaippa credit's Parantaka's canopying the temple with gold: Tiruttondar-tiru-andathi vv. 50, 64, 82 of Nambi-andar-Nambi. References besides are; In the 44th year of Kulottunga I in 1114 A.D,—also by his sister Kundavvai as having plated the temple of Nataraja with gold.—Epi. Indi. V. No. 13 c: Vikrama Chola in 1128 A.D. S.I.I. Vol. IV—225. Kulottunga II in Rajaraja Cholan Ula. pp. 59-56; also Ins. 268 of 1903. Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I, Ins. 6 of 1936-37.

endowments for maintaining daily and occasional poojas, festivals to the deity, the burning of perpetual lamps, institution of agraharas for learned Brahmans, for occasional and special food offerings, known as *Pavadai*, (2) and other endowments connected with the temple.

Rajaraja I and the recovery of the Tiruppadigams

Rajaraja I (985-1013) the most illustrious member of the dynasty ascended the Chola throne in 985 A.D. His vast conquests lasted eighteen years and in memory of his victories and the era of peace that followed, he built the great "Rajarajeswaram" temple at Tanjavur,—the finest example of Dravidian architecture in South India. It was a fitting emblem of his soaring ambition, power and genius, and above all his great and abundant religious faith. During his early years, he was a constant worshipper of Lord Thiagesa at Tiruvarur, and was enraptured there by the chantings of *Tiruppadigams* of the Samayacharyas at the time of *Arathanas*. The more he listened, the

(2) *Pavadai-tiru-amudu Offerings* being திருப்பவாடையல் of prepared rice of a determinate quantity spread evenly over a plank about 6 ft by 4 ft.and offered in front of Lord Nataraja, and then distributed among the Dikshitas and devotees.

The earliest reference to the institution of an endowment for *the Tirup-pavadai-amuthu* during the Thai-poosa-vizha is in one of the inscriptions 106 of 1936 of (1220-21 A.D.) being the offering of the food oblation on the occasion of Tai-poosam-a day famous in Chidambaram, for performance of the Tandava-(Ananda) dance-in answer to the prayers of His dovotees Vyaghrapada and Patanjali. also References for *Pavadai* offerings as in திருக்காமக் கோட்டமுடைய பெரிய நாச்சியார் in Ins. 107/1935. A number of his inscriptions speak to the provisions for the supply of fruits and flowers to Nataraja*. Ins. 266/1913 is a gift of land refering to a feeding house named *Arapperumselvi Salai* in the West Street Mudittalaikonda perumal Tiruvidi at Perumbarrappuliyur.

more his ardour grew to hear more of them. But, to his dismay, he heard that they were all lost, excepting those few that lingered on in the memories of the *Odhuvars* in the temple.

The fact was, that these hymns, taken down on palm leaves, as and when they were composed were during a period of political stress got together for safety and deposited in one of the rooms of the Chidambaram temple. All memories of this were lost, and Rajaraja,* hearing of the miraculous powers of Nambi-

* **St. Nambi Andar Nambi**

At Tirunaraiyur, about ten miles south west of Chidambaram the temple is dedicated to Siva as Sundareswarar, and Parvati, Tiripura Sundari ammai and sung by Saints Sambandar and Appar. The temple is also the seat of Pollappillaiyar to whom an Adisaiva priest was doing puja. The priest had a son, whe was destined to make Saiva religion flourish. One day, the priest had to go to a neighbouring place, and he instructed his son to attend to Pollappillaiyar. So the son performing duties of a priest offered fruits and sweet dishes to Pollappillaiyar and prayed to Him to eat the *neivedyam*—the offerings. On seeing that Pollappillaiyar did not partake of the food, the son felt sore and asked if he had done any wrong and why Pollappillaiyar did not accept his offerings; and, he was about to knock his head against a stone. Thereupon, Pollappillaiyar said, "Wait. Nambi" and accepted his offerings.

The priest's son hence-forth called Nambi-andar-Nambi, became over joyed and said "Oh, my Lord, it is already, late for my school: my master will take me to task; so I pray you teach me all the Vedas and Sastras."

Pollappillaiyar gladly taught His disciple everything. Nambi was thus progressing with his studies and composed the poem· *Tiru-irattai-manimalai* on Pollappillaiyar.

The Chola Abaya Kulasekhara, who was ruling at Tiruvarur came to know of the miracles of Nambi—and went to him with large quantities of fruits and sweets and requested Nambi to offer to Pollappillaiyar; Nambi sanctified the offerings and gave them to Pollappillaiyar who graciously took them.

andar-Nambi-the Gurukkal of Pollappillayar applied to him for information. Prompted by Pollappillayar, the Chola was told that the collections were in a room, at the back of the Golden Hall of Nataraja. Rajaraja's delight knew no bounds. He applied to the Dikshitas. Their answer was disquieting, as they required the very Samayacharyas who set their seals on the room to come and open it. The Chola was not outwitted. With great festivities, the icons of the Samayacharyas were brought to that very door. The door was forth with opened. And, what was their disapointment to find within an ant-hill over the heap of palm-leaves. The all-devouring thermites had eaten away a good portion of the precious leaves. Rajaraja fell into despair, and was soon comforted by a divine voice that announced that all was not lost, and those that were

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Thereupon the king was mightily pleased and prayed to Nambi-andar Nambi to bring to light the *Tevara hymns* of the great Saiva apostles and the histories of the Saiva saints. Nambi-andar-Nambi prayed to Pollappillaiyar who said, "There is at the back of the golden temple at Chidambaram a room bearing the palm imprints of the three great Apostles and the *Tevara hymns* are preserved there." Pollappillaiyar also recounted the histories of the Saiva Saints. This fact was intimated to the king.

The king accompanied by Nambi-andar-Nambi went to Chidambaram. There they all bathed in the sacred Sivaganga tank and after the usual ceremonies, went to the temple and worshipped the presiding Lord.*** Nambi-andar-Nambi then composed the poem *koyir-tiruppanniyar-Viruttam* on the Lord of the Golden Hall.

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After this, Nambi-andar Nambi went back to Tirunaraiyur and after spending his days in the service of Lord Siva. he attained his salvation.

See Author's "*The Great Temple at Tanjore*"—1935. p. 23 and "*Cholar-Koyil-Panigal*" 1948 refering to the temple as "By far the *grandest temple* in India" also *Encylo*: *Brittannica* 5th Edn, Vol. ii.

needed for the time had been saved. The Chola heaved a sigh of relief and gratitude to the Lord of his Heart, in Tillai's court. Oil was poured over the heap of ruins, and leaf after leaf as were found whole, picked and treasured and copied down.

Against this important event, one has only to set the work of revival of Tamil Music in recent days by the Rajah of Chettinad. If the white ants had not done the full work, the political decay that set in the mediaeval ages, and the faint hearts of the people for things religious led to the loss of the twelve *tirumurai*: it took the services of an ardent Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar and the patronage of Silasri Kasivasi Swaminatha Tambiran Swamigal to bring the *Tirumurai* back to their old glory. This is detailed later, when the Raja Raja Abaya Kulasekhara endowment of the Tiruppanandal Kasi Mutt was founded. Due to this work, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad has laid an indelible claim in history to the company of the great Chola as a great reviver of Tamil Music in the shape of the Tirumurai and other musical treasures.

St. Umapati Sivacharya has immortalized in verse the recovery of the hymns and their redaction in *Tirumurai-kanda-puranam*. He refers the Chola as "'Rajaraja abaya Kulasekhara Maharajah" and the day of the recovery of the hymns as a glorious day, in the history of Chidambaram, a day next in importance only to that of Nataraja's advent, and the institution of His cult. He says, that now, at one bound, the temple of Chidambaram became the temple of all the Saivites. Eleven of the *Tirumurai* mention Chidambaram as the "*Koyil*"—the House of god. Rajaraja's next step was to institute an endowment for the

recital of the *Tiruppadigam* in the 'Rajarajeswaram' temple by appointing 48 persons to recite the hymns,(A) and also for its recital in every other temple in his real mas an integral part of the daily rituals.

The recovery of the lost *Tiruppadigam* was Rajaraja's greatest triumph, greater than his far-off conquests, greater than even the building of the great *Dakshina-meru*, to the Lord of his devotion-*Peru Udayar*-(*Brahadiswara*). This glorious achievement of the Chola was momentous in the annals of Saiva history, and Lord Nataraja became at once, his *Ishta. Devata*, the patron god of his family and his successors. (AA) Rajaraja's devotion to Nataraja, in consequence

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(A) "ஸ்ரீ ராஜராஜ தேவர்க்கு யாண்டு இருபத்தொன்பதாவது வரை உடையார் ஸ்ரீராஜ ராஜீசுவரம் உடையார்க்குத் திருப்பதிகம் விண்ணப்பஞ் செய்து உடையார் ஸ்ரீராஜ ராஜ தேவர்க்குக் கொடுத்த பிடாரர்கள் நாற்பத்தெண்மரும் இவர்களிலே நிலையாய் உடுக்கை வாசிப்பான் ஒருவனும், இவர்களிலே நிலையாய் கெட்டி மத்தளம் வாசிப்பான் ஒருவனும் ஆக ஐம்பதின்மருக்கு பேரால் நிசதம் நெல்லு முக்குருணி நிவந்தமாய் ராஜ சேகரியோ டொக்கும் ஆடவல்லா னென்னும் மரக்காலால் உடையார் உள்ளூர் பண்டாரத்தே பெறுவர்"—

(AA) A Chola painting of tne 11th century in the circumambulatory passage around Sri Brahadiswarar's sanctum in the Tanjavur "Rajarajeeswaram" temple is indicative of Rajaraja's great faith and devotion to Lord Nataraja. The fresco is on a large scale. At the top, a part of the tiled roof of a hall is visible and it closely resembls the Kanakasabhai or the golden pavilion of the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram. An outstretched left hand holding the 'fire' on its palm and a side of the sinuous body are indications of a figure of Nataraja. To the right of this fragment, a stately personage is sitting in a pose of adoration. Three women evidently queens with folding hands are standing in a line with him. Two men with silver rods in their hands are stationed outside the hall; evidently they are attendants".—S. K. G. in J. I. O. S. A., June 1935.

was so over-whelming, that he named the deity of his heart as *Adavallan* and named his lineal years, the weights and measures as ஆடவல்லான் கோல், சிற்றம்பலக் கோல் and ஆடவல்லான் மரக்கால். The *Tillai Moovayira-var* honoured Rajaraja I with the *biru-das* of "*Siva-pada Sekhara* and "*Rajaraja*", and he became a humble devotee of the Lord of Tillai, his earlier name being Arunmozhi varman.

To the left of the inner gateway of the Eastern gopuram an inscription mentions an endowment made by Cholakulavalli for the recital of Nayanmar's *Pamalai* (Tevaram). References are also found in the inscriptions to the fact that there were individual sanctums for the Samayacharyas, such as a shrine for St. Sambandar, for St. Sundarar, and a mutt for St. Appar in the fourth court; the Rasakkal-tambiran-tirumaligai-tiruveedi adjacent to the south, west and north gopurams. Of these Sambandar's was canopied with gold. They are not in existence now.

All these instances A speak of the high esteem, in which the hymnists and their sacred utterances were held by the Cholas. S. I. I. IV. p. 223.

The Redaction of the Canonical Works–the Tirumurai :

St. Nambi-andar-Nambi (A.D. 975-1035) now set to work on the recovered *Tiruppadigams*. He compiled the hymns of St. Gnanasambanda into three books, those of St. Appar into another three: and those of St. Sundarar formed the seventh book: to these he added *Tiru-vachakam* and *Tirukkovaiyar* of St. Manikkavachaka, as the eighth. The ninth book was *Tiruvisaippa* by nine authors including the Chola Gandaradityа. The tenth was *Tirumantiram* by the

mystic yogin St. Tirumoolar. The eleventh was a collection of devotional hymns, composed by thirty nine poets from Nakkirar downwards to Nambiandar-Nambi himself, the third of whose ten pieces was Tiru-thondar-antadhi-the basis for St. Sekkizhar's classic work. Now, the whole extant collections of devotional literature had been collected together and compiled into eleven books of *Tirumurai.* Nambi's thoughts were there-after to give these verses their distinctive metre and *pan-(ragas).* It was a perplexing problem ; and the Lord came again to his rescue. In answer to his prayers, there came forth a divine voice directing them to a mute girl of the family of St. Tiru-neela-kanda-yazhpanar, who would give a sign of approval by show of tears, when the *pan* in which they were set to music and sung was appropriate. The girl was found and brought from Yerukkattampuli-yur and the hymns were set to music and sung to her, and their correct *pans* recorded.

Rajendra I (A. D. 1013–1044), was as great as his illustrious father, Rajaraja I. To Commenorate his conquests over lands beyond the seas, he moved his royal capital from Tanjavur to Gangai-Konda-Cholapuram, a city he himself founded.* He built therein Gangai Konda Choleeswaram, a complete replica of the Rajarajeswaram temple, his father had built at Tanjavur. Rajendra's benefactions to the temple at Chidambaram are referred to in many incriptions. Ins. 343 of 1931 refers to his endowment for திருத் தொண்டத் தொகைப் பாராயணம் in the holy

* Gangaikonda-Cholapuram 25 miles on the bus route from Kumbakonam.

presence of the Lord Naatraja, mentioned as அழகிய திருச்சிற்றம்பலமுடையார் in the Masi festival. The Chidambaram temple had a series of renovations during his time and that of his successors, Vikrama and Kulottunga I, so much so, the structure of Nataraja temple as it existed in Rajendra's time had disappeared and many of the inscriptions of Rajaraja I and Rajendra I are found scattered about in fragments ; one of Rajendra I is on the Navalinga shrine, of Rajendra II, arother of Rajamahendra deva is on the platform of Govindaraja and one of Rajaraja I is on the east wall of the second wall of enclosure.

Kulottunga I. A. D. 1070-1122. After Rajendra I, the country was again in a disturbed state until Kulottunga I an eastern Chalukya prince and a grandson of Rajendra I* inherited both the thrones of

**Kulottunga I's inscriptions found in the temple are many—Ins. 119 of 1888, on the outer north wall of the second prakara of the Nataraja Govindaraja shrine contain in one record the number of gifts by the King's sister Kundavai Alvar. One such refers to a gift of a precious stone (1) a tribute given him by the King of Kamboja which the Chola set up on one of the cross beams of *Edirambalam*-the Kanaka-Sabha-the stone however is not in evidence now.

(1) " வாழி வாழி யிம் மாநிலங் காக்கத்
திருமணிப் பொற்றேட்டெழுபத் தாண்டு
வருமறை முன்னே மன்னவர் சுமந்து
திருநிறைத்துச் சொரிந்த செம்பொற் குவையாற்
றன் குல நாயகன் தாண்டவம் பயிலுஞ்
செம்பொன் னம்பலஞ் சூழ் திருமா ளிகையும்
கோபுர வாசல் கூடசா லைகளும்
உலகு வலங் கொண் டொலி விளங்கு நேமிக்
குலவரை யுதய குன்றமொடு நின்றெனப்
பசும்பொன் வேய்ந்த பலவளர் பீடமும்
* * * *
ஒரு குடை நிழற் கீழ்த் தலமுழுதுங் களிப்ப "

the Cholas.* Kulottunga I was the next Imperial Chola devotee of this temple. *Abhayan, Jayadharan, Jayatungan, Kalippagayan, Kulottaman* are some of his surnames. He was a victorious monarch, and during his time, the Kalinga country was conquered, the Chalukyas were held in check on the banks of the Tungabadra and the Chola rule re-established in the Pandya and Chera country.

Friendly relations were established with the Sailendra King of Kadaram, (Sumatra and Malay

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2. ஓரிரண்டு திருக்குலமு நிலைபெற வந்தொரு குடைக் கீழ்ப்
கட லுந்திக்கு மீரிரண்டு படைத்துடைய விரவி
குலோத் தமனபயன் வாழ்க வென்றே"—கலிங்கத்துப்பரணி

1. Jayankondar, his court poet,gives a picture of the country before his accession, eulogising his conquests. In *Kalingattupparani* he says: "Dispelling the darkness of Kali" (கலி), "Abhaya came to the rescue of the world like the sun rising above the roaring sea, and driving away darkness before it—v 245-250.

All land gifts made to the temple were required to be engraved on the walls of the temple up to the time of Vikrama Chola (A.D 118). These transactions were in the name of Tiruppuliyur Chandeswara Deva Nayanar, but subsequently they were registered in the name of the temple Dikshita priests and trustees, either jointly or severally. The deeds registered in the name of Chandeswara indicate the period when the present shrine of Tiru-moolattaneswarar Sivalinga and the Chandesvara by its side was considered to be the sanctum-sanctorum of the temple. The prominence given to the Nataraja sanctum in later inscriptions accounts also for the discontinuance of Chandesvara and the substitution in his place of one of the temple committee. The change also suggests the reason why at the present day the Dikshithas of Chidambaram are the owners of the temple. In the time of Kulottunga III (1178-1216 A.D.), the orders of the King or his officers were written by his royal secretary; *Tiru-mantira-olai*

archipelago) and the Far-East are spoken of in the Lobe-Toewa Tamil record found in Sumatra. At home he abolished tolls and was therefore surnamed சுங்கம் தவிர்த்த சோழன்.

His many incriptions bear evidence to the several improvements and his gifts** to the temple, and also those of his relatives and chiefs in the fifty years of his rule. That a Chola palace existed at Chidambaram during his reign is mentioned in a Kancheepuram inscription (68 of 1921); it is non-existent now.

(*Contd.*)
were generally addressed to the executive member of the temple assembly—the temple priests—the managing committee and the supervisors of the temple.

The original title deeds of the lands granted and other connected documents such as the resolution of the village assembly to make the land rent-free on receiving some fixed amount from the donor or to distribute the due tax on other assessed lands of the village, had to be deposited in safe custody in a room or office of the temple called *Tirukkai-otti-pandaram* together with the sale deed if any. It is gathered also, that there was a committee in each village called நில அளவுப்பட பெருமக்கள் which was solely entrusted with the duty of classifying lands according to their yield and measuring them. There were conducted periodical surveys of the land; e.g., in the 17th year of Rajaraja (A.R.E.1913 p-96) and another in the 16th year of Kulottunga I. Eight different classes of lands are referred to in Ins. 262 of 1913. The extent, ownership, assessment, classification, etc., had to be noted in village and temple registers by clerks specially appointed for the purpose. Registering in village books and enjoyment were considered essential to establish one's ownership in any property.

A daughter of Kulottunga I—Ammangei Alvar *alias* Periya Nachiyar makes a gift for a flower garden in the 5th year of King Vira Rajendra.

In the 12th year and 125th day of this king, Sendamangalam Udaiyan Araiyan Edirilicolan *alias* Irungolan bought the necessary land for the temple of Vikrama Colisvaram Udaiyar at Parakesari-

Vikrama (1118—1135 A.D.) succeeded Kulottunga I. He took pride in calling the Lord of Chidambaram as his *Kulanayakam*–tutelary deity and gave away all the tributes which his feudatories gave him in his tenth year towards building new structures in the temple.

Among his earliest structural benefactions to the temple, were the completion of the second wall of enclosure, the gateway of the western tower, " அம்பல நிறைந்த வற்புதக் கூத்தர் இம்பர் வாழ வெழுந்தருளுவதற்குத் திருத்தேர்": the temple car to draw the miraculous dancer in procession at the great festivals; நிறைமணி மாளிகை நெடுந்தெரு வீதிதன், திருவளர் பெயராற் செய்து சமைத்தருளி: the forming of street named after him, பைம்பொற் குழித்த பரிகல முதலாச் செம் பொற் கற்பகத் தொடு பரிச்சிந்நமும், அளவில்லாதன வொளிபெற வமைத்து" —plates of gold and utensils. Looking at the various incriptions of Vikrama and of his father Kulottunga I, who vied with each other in making the temple of their *Kula-nayakam* shine as Meru, it may be surmised that the present structure of Govindaraja shrine took its shape and size in their time; perhaps the first two

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(*Contd.*)
nallur a hamlet of Perumbarrappuliyur) which had been founded by him. The King ordered the assessment of this temple land to be deducted from the temple accounts of the Village and the deed was ordered to he engraved on the Vikrama Colan Tirumaligai of the Aludaiyar temple in the temple of Nataraja. (Ins. 309 of 1913.)

Incriptions were often times re-engraved on the walls, when the original had worn out; Ins. 284 of 13 of the Chola, registers an endowment for the supply of 200 *Senguluneer* flowers per day and incidenally records that an earlier document embodying another gift by the same individual had become worn out, and therefore it was also caused to be inscribed on the same wall " இது ஜீர்ணிக்கையாலே இப்படியும் கல் வெட்டியது."

walls, now enclosing the second and third prakaras also as they go by the names *Kulottunga Cholan Tirumaligai*, "*Vikrama Cholan Tirumaligai*. They were begun during Kulottunga's reign and completed in Vikrama's time, and named after the then reigning monarch.

Vikrama is called *Akalangan* and *Thiraga-samudram* in his *prasastis*: The village names like தில்லை விடங்கன், கூத்தனூர், கோயிற் பூண்டி, சபாநாயகபுரம், தில்லை நாயகபுரம்,நடராஜபுரம்; the waterways named கூத்தாடு நாயகன் திருவோடை, ஆளுடையநாயகன் திருவோடை; the administrative officers named as தில்லையம்பல பல்லவ ராயன், திருச்சிற்றம்பல முடையான் நக்கன், இளைய திருச் சிற்றம்பல முடையான், தில்லையம்பலப் பேரரையன் speak to the veneration, the Chola held in Natarja, the Lord of his heart.*

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* Ins. 120 of 1888 of Kulottunga I is that of Naralokavira. It is an elaborate one consisting of 31 Samskrit Versss and 36 *venbas* in Tamil metre.

In the Sanskrit portion of the inscription, the following works are mentioned : ("the setting of innumerable street lights (vithi-dip), the watering of streets on festive occasions, a garden of areca palms, the erection of a mandapam near the sea together with a fresh water tank with a banyan tree on its bank for the use of the Lord during the festival of Masimakham and the opening of a road to it, the eonstruction of a great hall called after him *Naraloka viran-mandapa* provided with two tall towers reaching out to the sky, and the hundred-pillard hall, where Pasupati seeing that it was a place meet for his dance, disported himself with his beloved; the building of a flight of stone steps to the sacred tank-the Siva ganga; the erection of a hall for the recitation of the Thevaram of Sambandar,-tbe covering of the Perambalam with copper plates; and among other gifts a bugle, a golden water pot, an image of Sambandar, and a permanent endowment for the daily supply of oil and milk for children ; and the erection of a Prakara and a mantapa and a high outer wall of stone for the shrine of Parvati."—*The oldest Chidambaram inscriptions*.—S.R.B.

Naraloka-Vira-a Chola Chieftain

In between the reigns of Kulottunga I and of his son Vikrama, the munificent gifts to the temple are associated with a Chola Chieftain and statesman *Naraloka Vira*. He distinguished himself in the Chola wars aginst Vengi and Orissa as also against the Pandyas and Cheras. He seems to have devoted all his time after his military campaigns, in works of religious merit. His acts of piety are found chiefly at Tiruvadigai and Chidambaram, and his inscriptions are spread over from about the 28th year of Kulottunga I to about the 6th year of Vikrama Chola.

Kulottunga 11. 1143—1150 A. D.

Kulottunga II succeeded his illustrious father, and for nearly two decades dedicated himself to making structural additions to the Chidambarrm temple. *The Kulottunga Cholan Ula* sung on the King, and *Rajaraja Cholan Ula*sung on his son, by their court poet Ottakkuthar give particulars of these. The *Perambalam*, the inner temple court, the eastern gopuram with the seven storeys, the walls of the enclosure provided with inner covered pavilions (மாடம்) பரங்தோங்கு மாளிகை) the shrine of the goddess Sivakami-*Tirukkama Kottam*, a temple Car and the four main streets are claimed for him by the former poem.

(*Contd.*)

All the above are referred to in Tamil verses and they further mention that the hymns of the first three samayacharyas were engraved on copper plates, and a sluice of stone was constructed to a large irrigation tank on the borders of Chidambaram. Both are not in existence now at this late date, also the Naralokaviran mandapam with two Tall towers nor the mandapam for the recitations of *Tiruppadigams* of Sambandar. The Hundred-Pillared Mandapam stands, however, much in disrepair.

" கோலத்தாற் கோயிற் பணிகுயிற்றிச்—சூலத்தா
னுகுந் திருப் பெரும்பே ரம்பலமுங் கோபுரமும்."

The latter *Ula* mentions the following among others, Cirrambalam, many mandapams, wall of enclosure (சுற்றிய மாளிகை), altar (பீடிகை-பலிபீடம்), Cloistered hall, (மாடம்), a tower (கோபுரம்), upper storeys (சூளிகை), streets (தெரு), gateways (தோரணம்), the sh rine of the goddess Sivakami and its front enclosure.

" சேய பெரிய திருக்குலத்து—நாயகன்
சிற்றம்பலமுந் திருப்பெரும் பேரம்பலமு
மற்றும் பலபல மண்டமுஞ்—சுற்றிய
மாளிகையும் பீடிகையு மாடமுங் கோபுரமுஞ்
சூளிகையு மத்தெருவுந் தோரணமு—மாளுடையான்
கோயிற் றிருக்காமக் கோட்டமு மக்கோயில்
வாயிற் றிருச்சுற்று மாளிகையுந்—தூயசெம்
பொன்னிற் குயிற்றி —ராஜராஜ சோழன் உலா

His gilding of the *Perambalam* (Kanaka-sabha) is referred to further in two of his other inicriptions at Tirupalaturai (Ins. 268 of 1903 and No. 120 of Pudukottah). *Takkayagaparani* credits him with the installing of a தெக்கிண மேரு வென்னப் பீடிகை in Tillai and in consequence the Chola got the biruda of *Sri Pitam Kanda Periaperumal*.

By these acts of devotion, Kulottunga II came to be known as *Anapaya*, *Abhaya* and *Tiruneerru Cholan*. An inscription of his eighth year from Tirumanik-kuli calls him as " தில்லைமாநகர் சிறப்புடைத்தாக திருமுடிசூடிய ஸ்ரீ குலோத்துங்கச் சோழ தேவர்." This is in remembrance of his meritorious acts and his coronation at Chidambaram.

The last act of Kulottunga II was the removal of the shrine of Govindaraja. His renovations and additions to the temple were extensive, and finding the sanctum of Lord Nataraja 'Cribbed, cabined and con-

fined' to its utter limits. and the shrine of Govindaraja an intrusion, he moved the deity out. Possibly the times were rife with rivalries between the devotees of Siva and Hari and the Chola took sides with Saivites.

புறம்பிற் குறும்பனைத்து
முன்னர்க்க டலகழின் மூழ்குவித்த—சென்னி
—ராஜராஜ சோழன் உலா.

நவநிதிதூ

" பேத்தற் கருங்கடவு ளெல்லை யிலானந்தக்
கூத்தைக் களிகூரக் கும்பிட்டுப்—போத்தின்மேற்
றில்லைத் திருமன்றின் முன்றிற் சிறு தெய்வத்
தொல்லைக் குறும்பு..........தொகுத்தெடுத்து "
—குலோத்துங்கச் சோழன் உலா.

" முன்றிற் கிடந்த தடங்கடல் போய்
முன்னைக் கடல் புகப்—பின்னைத் தில்லை
மன்றிற் கிடங்கண்ட கொண்டன் மைந்தன்
மரகத மேருவை வாழ்த்தினவே " —தக்கயாகப் பரணி.

Kulottunga III (A. D. 1178—1216) succeeded his father, the great Anapaya. His long reign of nearly 40 years saw the heydey of Chola rule. In the early part of his reign, in the three wars against the Pandya, the Ceylonese and kongu Kings, he was successful and he crowned himself at Chidambaram assuming the title '*Tribhuvanavira Deva.* To commemorate these victories he built the *Tribhuvaneswara temple* at Tribhuvanam near Kumbakonam-(Ins.190of1907). The largest number of incriptions in the Chidambaram temple is his.* Ins. 190 of 1907 enumerates his victories, claims the build-

** Possibly the mandapam was begun by Kulottunga II and completed by Kulottunga III, and very appropriately used for the purpose of inaugurating the great work of Sekkizhar in the latter reign. The similarity of lower freizes of dancing poses in this hall and on the amman shrine built by Kulottunga II is note writh. A similar 1000 pillard Hall was built by Kulottunga III at Tiruvakkarai. (S.A.Dt. 190/1904.)

ing of the gopuram and mukhamandapam of Nataraja (not identified now) and the enclosing cloister of the Sivakami amman temple. Kulottunga III is also credited with the construction of the Thousand pillared hall: *the Raja Sabha* or the *Devasiriya mandapam*–wherein St. Sekkizhar expounded his *Periya puranam.**

" வந்து சூழ நிரைத்த வையிரு நூறுகான் மணிமண்டபத்
தெந்தையர் திருவருளை யுன்னி யிருந்து சேவையர் காவலர்
செந்தமிழ்த் தொடையால் விளங்கிய திருவிருத்த நிருத்தனார்
தந்த சொன்முத லாவெடுத்தனர் தாணுவான புராணநூல் "

—சேக்கிழார்.

Kulottunga III was invested with the title of *Rajakkal Tambiran* owing to these pious acts. He is also credited with constructing the stone pavements all around the fourth inner enclosure, and its walls running along the four main gopuras. They are named *Rajakkal Tambiran Tirumaligai* in consequence.

Periya Puranam of St: Sekkizhar

After the recovery of the *Tiruppadigams* by Chola Rajaraja I, the next great event in Saiva history is the composition of the *Tirut-tondar-puranam* by St. Sekkizhar of Kunrattur. *Periapuranam* as it is more popularly known, is a narration of the lives of the 71 of the Lord's elect, sixty three of them named individually. Sekkizhar was the prime minister under Kulottunga II, and as a mark of his esteem the Chola invested him with the title of *Uttama-Chola-Pallava*. After Kulottunga II, the minister continued to serve his son and successor Kulottunga III. While the minister was stationed at Tirunageswaram and engaged in supervising the construction of Tri-bhuvanam temple, he learnt with alarm, the leanings of the young king to Jain teachings consequent on the Jain work *Jivakachinta-*

* Ins. 262 and 263 of 1913

mani being expounded to him. The minister explained that the adoption of tenets other than Saivism would be "choosing the husk instead of the grain, the dry cow instead of the milch one, the desert instead of a cool garden, a piece of iron instead of the sugar cane, and the glow worm instead of the lamp." and added that those teachings were useful neither in this world nor in the next." The minister pleaded, at the same time for a close study of the Saiva tenets contained in Sundarar's *Tirut- tondat-tokai*, and *Tirut-tondar-antati*, a sketchy history of the sixty-three saivite saints by Nambi--andar- Nambi. The King's heart was moved and he commissioned Sekkizhar to compile an elaborate work on the lives of the saiva saints and sent him to Chidambaram.

Sekkizhar immediately set to work on his great work and prayed to Lord Nataraja for 'the Word' to commence his Epic. "உலகெலாம்" was the inspired and divine word revealed to him to start the great work with. Thus blessed, the work commenced* with "He who is hard to be understood and expressed in

> "உலகெலாம் உணர்ந் தோதற் கரியவன்
> நிலவுலாவிய நீர்மலி வேணியன்
> அலகிற் சோதியன் அம்பலத் தாடுவான்
> மலர் சிலம்படி வாழ்த்தி வணங்குவாம்."

word". The Chola, eagarly watched its progress with loving care. Sekkizhar visited places far and near,

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(*Contd.*)

Inscription No. 537 of 1922, reveals an interesting fact, as to how temples in distress were helped by the more fortunate ones among them. It is recorded that in the 16th year of Rajaraja III. the *Mahesvaras*, and sthanathar of temple of Tirukkannapuram approached the temple authorities of Chidambaram in their assembly hall and represented to them that the grant of 50 velis of land granted as *devadana* to the temple had become reduced in extent and that there was no other source of income for the temple

to see personally the places associated with the lives of the Nayanmars. The work took a full year to complete, and the last word vouchsafed by the lord of Ponnambalam was again உலகெலாம்

> " என்றும் இன்பம் பெருகும் இயல்பினால்
> ஒன்று காதலித்து உள்ளமும் ஓங்கிட
> மன்றுளார் அடியாரவர் வான்புகழ்
> நின்றதெங்கும் நிலவி உலகெலாம் "

Kulottunga III hurried to Chidambaram to hear of the completion of the great work. It was a glorious day for the Holy City and the Saivite world, when Sekkizhar began to expound his work from day to day in the great thousand-pillared Raja Sabha, which the king had constructed, for this great purpose. The exposition took a full year, and the king was beside himself with joy in religious fervour. This was a great event which made Chidambaram look like Kailas: the very Sivaloka on Earth!

The manuscript was folded in silk and deposited in a golden casket and carried with its author in procession in the streets of Chidambaram on a fully caparisoned royal elephant ; the King stationing himself beside Sekkizhar, and heaved the fly-whisks.

(*Contd.*)

to meet the customary expenses of festivals and worship and that the assembly resolved that in the distrirts within the influence of the temple and in all the surrounding parts of Cholamandalam, Vira Chola mandalam, Rajaraja Pandimandalam, Naduvilnadu and Jayankonda Chola mandalam certain specified quantity of paddy or of money were to be raised and after paying a small fee for such a collection; a capital endowment was to be created for the temple in want.

(A) Ins 299, 267, 281, 280, 283, 285, 303, 306, 315, 316 of 1913. speak to the provisions for the supply of fruits and other flowers to Lord Nataraja.

reaching the temple in royal pomp, the work was placed at ths feet of Lord Nataraja and the author honoured with *Gnana-mudi*, and the title of *Tondar-seer-paravuvar* while the Three Thousand Dikshitas of the temple acclaimed the work as the Fifth Veda. He was besides invested with the title of Tondaiman-assigning him with the governance of Tondaimandalam. Sekkhizhar with his brother Palavarayar governed the land for sometime, and then returning to the presence of Lord Nataraja, in due time obtained his final release.

The poet immortalised himself "not only by the substance of his poem, but also by his inimitable style of writing which is peerless as a combination of simplicity, force and beauty in the whole range of *Viruttam* literature in Tamil." The work thus inaugurated and completed remains to this day as the *Liber sacrorum* of the Saivite and has been added as the twelth of the canonical works.

To the lover of Tamil literature this is the greatest event in the literary history of the land. Even now, the Tamils look wih pride on that day. The University revived the study of Tamlil Literature and has begun to give a proper place to Sekkizhar and his masterpiece.

Rajaraja III. A. D. 1216–1246.

Rajaraja III succeeded Kulottunga III. Though he had a rule of thirty years he has defeated and taken prisoner by his own brother-in-law and released by the intervention of the Hoysala of Dwarasamudra. The aggression of the Pandyan power under Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I•(A. D. 1251) was also another reason for the Chola decline.

Rajendra III. A. D. 1246-1279.

Rajendra III was the last of the House of imperial Cholas. Twenty-four inscriptions of this Chola are found in the Chidambaram temple, Most of them; register gifts of land for flower gardens; one of his 3rd year, stipulating. 133 to 200 lotus garlands to be supplied to the Nataraia temple. More than in anything, he prides himself in his *prasastis* on being a worshipper at the divine lotus feet of Kanaka-Sabhapati at Vyaghrapura", and in another, Ins 93 of 1897 he calls God-Nataraja his *Ishtadevata*: his personal and family deity.

Ko rravankudi St. Umapati Sivachariar. A.D.1290-1340)

St. Umapati Sivachariar of the 13th century was one of the Tillai Moovayirattars. His scholarship in Vedic and Agamic philosophy was profound. His earlier works were *Tirumusai-Kanda-puranam*: an

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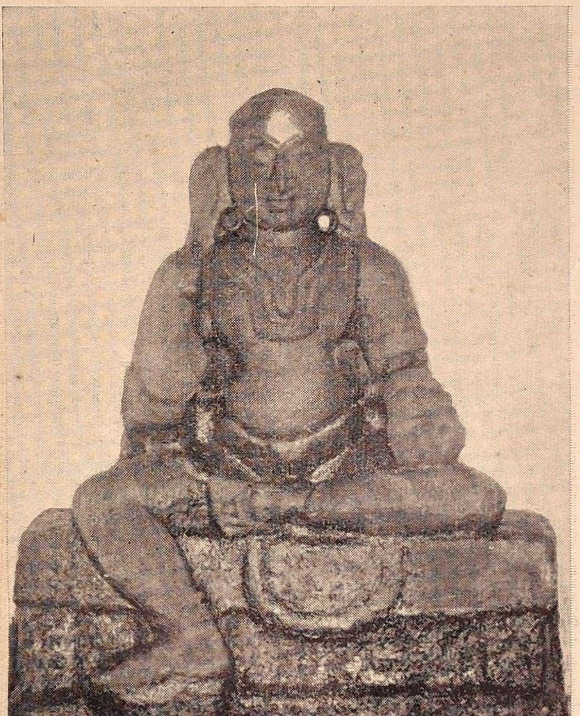
NOTE:

Mahesvaras (மாகேசுவரர்) were a body of Saiva mendicants who dedicated themselves to the service of the templc to which they volutarily attached themelves. They were fed from out of the temple food offerings, and they concerned themselves with the correct maintenance of the institution. The State recognised their services, placed them under the care of the தேவாரத் திருப் பதிகம் ஓதுவார், who were called மாகேசுவரர் கண்காணிச் செய் வார். Any gift to them from worshippers they credited to the temple funds and they are known to have carried our repairs and renovations in certain temples out of these amounts as references are found in inscriptions to "மாகேசுவரர் பிக்ஷைத் திரவியத்தைக் கொண்டு செய்தது".

They had the privilege of bringing any misconduct on the part of the temple servants, or of any malfeasance, misfeasance or non-feasance on thc part of the privileged in the temple to the king in person and these petitions were immediately enq uired into by the King himself and royal mandates issued for remedying them.



St UMAPATI SIVACHARIAR
Korravankudi :

essence of Sekkizhar's *Tirut-tondar-puranam* and a life of St. Sekkizhar-*Sekkizhar Puranam.*

It is said that one day, as was the custom, he was returning home after his service at the temple, borne on his palanquin with torch bearers, he was struck by the remark of an aged person drinking rice water poured into his hands, "பட்ட கட்டையிற் பகற்குருடு போகிறது காண்". Umapati immediately read the import of his words, jumped out of the palanquin, neared the saint, and even drank the remains of the rice water as it trickled down his elbow. He had found his Guru! He was *Marai-Gnana-Sambandar* of Tirukkalancheri. From then, Umapati forgot all about his temple services and sat at the feet of his master. The Dikshitas soon came to know of the incident and ex-communicated him, he having tasted of the remains of the drink of another and more, that from a non-caste man. Umapati, then founded an *ashram* of his own in Korravangudi (the western part of the University campus). While so living with the Guru he had found, he brought out *Sankalpa-nirakaranam,* being commentaries on *Pauttragama* in Sanskrit, *Tirup-patikak-kovai*; and other works in Saiva philosophy, as *Sivaprakasam*, *Tiruvarutpayan*, *Vina-Venba*, *Potrip - pah-rodai*, *Nenju - vidu - thoothu*, *Unmai - neri-Vilakkam*; and the saint *Kodikkavi* was composed by when he was sought and requested by the Dikshitas, after his ex-communication. They were

(*Contd.*)

These mendicants (மாகேசுவரர்) had in course of time acquired a privileged position and got into the confidence of donors to the temple, their endowments were entrusted to their safe custody as 'பன்மாகேசுவரர் ரக்ஷை' in Siva temples; and if it was a Vishnu shrine as ஸ்ரீ வைஷ்ணவ ரக்ஷை—the confidence being, that these mendicants would even lay down their lives, to see that these enevolent endowments are carried out faithfully.

prompted by Lord Nataraja Himself, Who desired that His *bhakta* should be called in when the temple flag-hoisting (*Dwajarohanam*) at a *brahmotsavam* would not go up. Umapati came there, sang *Kodikkavi*, a philosophical treatise for the occasion and the flag went up to the great solace of all that beheld it.

The Lord and His bhakta were praised. By then, he had composed *Koyirpuranam* describing the religious traditions and antiquities connected with the advent of Nataraja to the temple. It was long in coming out, and Nataraja Himself initiated its publication, by making it known to the Dikshitas that '·நாம் கொற்ற வன்குடி உமாபதியுடைய பேடகத்துள் இருக்கின்றோம்''. The Dikshitas approached Umapati, and the work was duly inaugurated in the holy presence of the Sabhanayaka.

Here again; Umapati had the privilege of receiving an epistle from Lord Nataraja Himself, ordering *Diksha* and *Mukti* to a devotee Perran Samban. The saint obeyed, but his conduct was disputed by scholiasts and his act questioned. His reply was that he showed the same grace to a thorny plant முள்ளிச் செடி growing in a temple trough. The saint lived here for some time thereafter, and was taken to the holy feet of Siva in his time.

Perran Samban was a devotee of the Lord, who attained his beatification at this ashram. He took it as his religious duty to supply daily the required firewood for the temple kitchen, as well for St. Umapati to prepare his oflerings to the Lord. One day, the river he had to cross on the way, was in heavy floods, and Umapati's offerings were delayed. Umapati questioned as to the cause, and when told; he wished to

meet the devotee when he appeared again. The next day, he did come and he produced an Epistle addressed to him in the following terms.

"அடியார்க் கெளியன் சிற்றம்பலவன் கொற்றங்குடியார்க்
கெழுதிய கைச் சீட்டுப்—படியின் மிசைப் பெற்றான்
சாம்பானுக்குப் பேதமற தீக்கை செய்து முத்தி கொடுக்க முறை"

And, Umapati obeyed and the devotee attained the feet of the Lord Sivam.

The shrine dedicated to the saint in Korravankudi stands to this day visited by devotees ; and it is a part of the University site, there having grown up in its vicinity, within recent years number of laboratories for an Engineering and Technology College. The shrine is now maintained by the Turaiyur Kumara devar mutt at Vriddachalam and pujas performed at the sanctum by a Lingayat ; a festival is also conducted, in honour of the saint in Chitrai *astham* (April-May) each year.

The age of the Mediaeval Pandyas : A.D. 1216–1317.

The earlier Pandyas have left no epigraphs of their times in the temple. The mediaeval Pandyas came to power about 1216 A.D. over-shadowing the Imperial Cholas, who for nearly 400 years had considered each of them " a bee at the lotus feet of Natesa, their tutelary deity at the Golden Hall in the excellent Vyaghragrahara (Chidambaram)" A succession of the later Pandyas of this line also considered Nataraja and his temple, as the centre of their religious life and benefactions.

Two of the line : *Maravarman Sundara Pandya I* (A.D. 1216—38) and his son *Maravarman Sundara Pandya* II A.D. 1238-51 reigned for about 35 years. The first is said to have won the Chola country and

given it back to Rajaraja III. (S.I.I. IV p. 108-109)** They made frequent visits to Chidambaram for worshipping the Lord at the temple.(1) The others mostly record their military exploits, remissions of assessment of lands granted to temples, and flower gardens. (Ins. 293/13; 6/1931 ; 288/13), for the conduct of festivals, for providing offerings in the temple and the like.

Jatavarmau Sundara Pandya I. 1251-1271 A.D.

By far the greatest of the later Pandyas was Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I. He was a powerful conqueror and his military exploits extended up to Cuddapah. Inscriptions have it that at Nellore, he performed his 'Vijayabhisheka' (anointment of victory). There are thirty inscriptions of this Pandya on the eastern and western gopuras of the temple; three of them(2) containing verses in praise of his military exploits, against Kopperunjinga and Rajendra III. Ins. 546/18 speaks of certain life-pensions for the upkeep of a Sundara Pandyan Toppu (Nandanavanam), and of the south car street at Chidambaram; another of his eighth year refers to certain land endowments 'திருநாமத்துக்காணி' for a festival for Tillaik-kali spoken of as திருச்சிற்றம்பல மாகாளியம்மன். Ins. 6/1936-37 speaks of his canopying the Ponnambalam with gold and consequently he is known as 'Koyil-Pon-veynda-Perumal.

**(1) One of his prasastis mentions as:
"தெய்வப் புலியூர்த் திருவெல்லையிற் புக்கு
பொன்னம்பலம் பொலிய யாடுவார் பூவையுடன்
மன்னுந் திருமேனி கண்டுமனங் களித்து"—

(2) Ins. 332, 340 & 361/13 on the eastern and western main gopura entrances.

It was this great king Jatavarman Sundara Pandya that constructed the western gopuram of the temple also performed the *tulabhara* ceremony weighing himself against gold and used it for covering the canopy of Nataraja's sanctum with gold.(1) He is known in inscriptions as Bhuvaneswaran, Ellantalaiyana Perumal, Koyil Pon-veynda Perumal. He is also credited with having built a golden hall at Chidambaram. (S.I.I.IV. Nos. 627 and 630)

Maravarman Vira Pandya A.D. 1253—1275

Six inscriptions of this Pandya(2) are worth noticing. They register gifts of lands for gardens, for offerings of lotus flowers to the shrine of Alagiya-Tiruch-chirrambalamudaiyar, and appointing eighteen persons to work on this and others for nandanavanas; and another Ins 269/13 for the settlement of Soliya Saliyars (weavers by profession), who are even now a numerous community at Chidambaram, A.D. 1262).

Maravarman Vikrama Pandya—A.D. 1269-1296

He was a son of Jatavarman Kulasekhara and contemporary of Chola Kulottnga III, who helped him to the Pandya throne. He is remembered for

(1) Chidambaram inscription of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya celebrating the Tulabhara ceremony :—

இனவரிக் கிம்புரி வெண் பிறைக்
கோட்டிகல் வெங் கடுங்கட்

சிமைத்த வெங்கரிச் சுந்தரத்
தென்னவன் றில்லை மன்றில்

வனசத் திருவுடன் செஞ்சொற்
றிருவை மணந்த தொக்கும்

கனகத் துலையுடன் முத்தத்
துலையிற் கலந் ததுவே—S. I. I. VI. p. 189.

(2) Ins. 269, 279, 320, 328, 351, 386; 1913 of also S.I.I. VII, 768-769.

several endowments for the supply of flowers and plantains for the Lord Nataraja's worship, (270/13); and his Queen Ulagamulududayal also made a gift of lands in Pallippadai *alias* Vikramacholanallur, Erukkattancheri *alias* Jayankondacholanallur, and Manalur for maintaining a Tiru-nandanavanam named after the Queen (276 of 1913). Ins. 295/13

No. 277 of 1913, is an interesting inscription as the process of the foundation of a new village is typically illustrated. It is on the south wall of the first prakara. It speaks of the founding of a new agrahara, named Vikrama-Pandya-Chathurvedi-mangalam on the western side of Perumbarrap-puliyur, and its presentation to 108 learned Brahmins. The village is evidently after the name of an unknown brother or father (Nayanar) of Sundara Pandya. In the centre of the village was established the temple of Vikrama Pandyeswara, similarly designated. The village was intended to accommodate primarily 108 Brahmanas, among whom were many well-versed in Vedas and Sastras and able to expound the same. Four velis of land were purchased for the village site and included within it, the house sites of 108 Brahmanas mentioned above, of men who were in charge of the village library (servant-bhandarathar) and of other village servants. பணி மாக்கள் In purchasing the land with its trees, wells, paths, channels, embankments indicating land-divisions (bhagastraya) and all other benefits, the rights and the privileges of the old tenants and title holders were completely broughout up. The right of way was secured for the Brahamanas to walk to the tank காவற்குளம் - everyday for the purpose of performing Sandhya-vandhanam prayers. Land for grazing the cattle was also provided for. Also fcr the maintenance of the 108 Brahman families and others were acquired 117 3/4 velis of land in the village of Rajasikkamaninallur *alias* Puliyangudi. The Brahamanas evidently, had each a full veli of land. The following other *Vrittis* were also settled : teachers of *Vedas* 3, teachers of *Sutras* 1, two Doctors, $1\frac{3}{4}$ ambadayas $1\frac{1}{2}$; village accountant $\frac{1}{2}$; drummer $\frac{1}{4}$; potter $\frac{1}{4}$; blacksmith $\frac{1}{4}$; Carpenter $\frac{1}{2}$, Goldsmith $\frac{1}{4}$, *Irankolli* (Washerman) $\frac{3}{8}$, barber $\frac{3}{8}$, Village watchman-padi-kappan-$\frac{3}{4}$, and the village servant (Vettiyan) $\frac{1}{8}$. Of the நத்தம் land outside the

exempts duties and assessments on land presented by one Chedirayan for maintaining thirty-six persons employed in a water-shed in the mandapam known as *Anaiyerrukkudam*, south of the seven-storeyed gopuram on the east side of Rasakkal Tambiran Tirumaligai, and for feeding fifty-four devotees of goddess Kali and also the temple supervisors. Three others: Ins. 336, 337 and 353/13 mention his victories and his assumption of the biruda *Bhuvanekaviran*, the place consequenty is known as *Bhuvaneka-viran pattinam*, the modern Bhuvanagiri.

Maravarman Kulasekhara Deva—A. D. 1268-1311, was the son and successor of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I. Of his many inscriptions, Ins. 286/1913 is a record of a gift of land for providing daily offerings, in a shrine situated in one of the streets of Perumbarrappuliyar, another (547 of 1918) for the maintenance of certain flower gardens and (366 of 1913 of his 29th regnal year) for a daily offering எல்லாம் தலையான பெருமாள் சந்தி in the name of his father Jatavarman Sundara Pandya to the Kulottunga Chola Vinayaka Pillaiyar, who is enshrined on the seven storcyed western gopura.

(*Contd.*)

agrahara quarter, three parts were set apart for வெள்ளான் காணியாளர் and the remainder for other professionals. The fruit trees, Gardens, ponds, water pits, grazing grounds, irrigation channels, uncultivable waste, waste, embarkments of fields and pathways, included in the village site were made over (to the donees) as per customary law. All taxes were excused, but it was stipulated that from the 14th year of the King, 500 kalams of superior paddy, was to be messured out every year to the temple at Chidambaram for conducting the எல்லாம் தலையான பெருமாள் சந்தி and that all lands which belonged to temples திருமாநாட்டுக்காணி must be demarkated by stones marked with the திரிசூலம் (trident)

The Vijayanagar Kings

Inscriptions of the Kings of the Vijayanagar dynasty are found all over South Arcot District. There are several of them found in this temple relating to both the earlier and the later dynasties. The earliest of them is one dated 1428 A.D. of the time of King Devaraya II, A.D. 1422-1446. It is on the north wall of the Karpaka Vinayakar shrine on the western gopuram, and is interesting as embodying an account of the method by which temples were then supported and controlled by rulers. It is an order of the King to the managers of all temples and temple charities in the Trichirappalli Valudilambattu *usavadis* thus:

The first dynasty of Vijayanagar having terminated with the Saluvas, an Ins. 322/13, on a second pillar of the western entrance into the second prakara of the temple records that an agent of Narasa-nayaka-Udayar named Tirumalaikkolundar was in management* of the Chidambaram temple.

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*As we have been informed by the *Maheswaras* and Marudavanachivan that the king's officers in the villages belonging to the temples, are unjustly collecting the taxes called, காணிக்கை, அரசுபேறு, காரணக்கர் ஜோடி, விசேஷதாயம், அளமான்ஜி and others, representing these to be dues payable to the palace; that the villagers, taking up on martgage the lands purchased presented or otherwise owned by the temples, stubbornly refuse to give back those lands to the temple and that as a consequence, the temple tenants have abandoned the villages causing thereby the stoppage of worship in these temples, we order that the taxes mentioned above shall no longer be collected, the only payable tax, however, being the *Sulavarippon*; that the worship etc., in your temples shall be conducted in future under the direction of the said Marudavanachivan and that temple lands shall in no case be let out on (long) lease, nor shall they be assigned to any one as tax-free, hereditary, free gift or bhatta-vritti* (Epi. Epi. 1914, p, 97: also A.R.E. 1908 p. 250.)

Krishnadeva Raya. A. D. 1506-1530

Krishnadeva Raya was the greatest cf the Vijayanagar emperors. His benetactions to the temple at Kanchi, Tirupati, Tiruvannamalai and Srirangam are well-known.*

His significant benefaction to the Chidambaram temple was the building of the North Gopura in 1516 A. D. Ins. 174 and 175 of 1892 mention it ; also Ins. 371/13, The gopuram was begun by Krishnadevaraya, and was completed by his successor Achyutha Deva Raya*.

In 1510 A.D. the King made a gift of three villages with an income of 1400 rekai (gadyana) for the mahapooja of *alagiya Tiruchirrambala Udaiyar Tambir-anar*. (Ins. 343 of 1913). An epigraph (Ins. 333 of 1913) on the estern gopuram of the temple records the the grant in A.D. 1422, of the village of Chidambara-nathapuram to the temple by one Taranikka mangara-sayyan—identified as the Viceroy of Krishna Devaraya in Tiruvadhirajya in South Arcot District.

The religious interest followed by Krishnadeva Raya's successor, *Achyutha deva maharaya* is seen from another inscription No. 2 of 1936, who in 1529 A.D. gives the names of 82 villages, the income from which amounting to 3,000 pon had been originally allotted by Krishnadeva Raya Nayaka for the expenses of the car and other festivals and for repairs to the temple at *Perumbarrappuliyur*, and was now endowed by the King at the instance of Saluva-Dannayaka, and was left in charges of a *tapasvin* named Periyadever.

Later Vijayanagara rulers like Sriranga II (A.D. 1478-1586) and Venkata I (A.D, 1586-1615) of the

*also vide, J.O.R. Vol. XII p. 172.

Karnata dynasty are mentioned in several inscriptions found in the temple; INS. 348, 349, 359 369 of 1213; and one of thoir chiefs, Vaiyappa-Krishnappa-Kondama Nayakkar is frequently mentioned as having presented several villages to the temple, and also declared tax-free all the villages owned by the temple from early times. Muthu-Krishnappa-Nayaka son of Kondama Nayaka is said to have made some repairs to the temple during the time of Venkata I. Ins. 349 and 362 of 1913 on the south gopuram, record a provision for twenty offerings to be distributed among the saiva *paradesis* in the temples, and this was placed under the supervision of Namasivaya Udaiyar,* the superintendent of all Kattalai services.

The Kerala Rulers :

The rulers of Cochin have likewise been devotees of the Lord of Chidambaram from very early times, possibly from the days of Ceraman Perumal Nayanar, contemporary of St. Sundarar in the VIII century. Their inscriptions are mostly for providing food offerings to the deity. Ins. 350 of 1913 is a record of the Cochin Rama Varma Maharaja of the family of Ceraman Perumal Nayanar of the year 1576-7 A. D. making a grant of 33 dishes (தளிகை) or food offerings to *Ananda-tandava-Perumal* i.e., Nataraja for distribution among *Maheswaras*, Brahmans and temple cooks. Another record of A.D. 1593 mentions the making over of the five villages, grouped under Asuvur in the districts of Devamandala Sirmai and Viranarayana Sirmai, Terkku-nadu and Vadakkunadu, and all others that had been enjoyed by the temple of Chidambaram from early times had been made tax-free and provision was first made for a huge quantity of food offerings daily under the name of Kondamanayakkan Kattalai.

Appaiya Dikshitar (1553—1626 A.D.) is another great literary luminary and Saiva Advaita philosopher of the 16th-17th centuries, connected with Chidambaram. Born at Adaiyappalam near Kanchi, he spent his earlier years in the north. By his 22nd year, his reputation for learning had spread far and wide. Pandya Candrasekhara invited him to his court for a philosophical disputation, and it culminated in the marriage of Appaiya Dikshitar with his opponent Ratnakheta's daughter Mangalanayaki. The young aspirant's remaining period of life for 50 years was spent mostly as a favourite in the courts of Emperor Vengata II, at whose instance he wrote a work on *alankara* called"*Kuvalayananda*". Hemet at this Court, the royal guru Tatacharya in a religious disputation and came out victorious. Cinna Timma, Cinna Bomma (1549–78) princes of the Aravidu dynastry at Chandragiri and at Vellore also patronised him. Here, Appaiya wrote the greater part of his 108 works, in the task of revival of Saiva Advaita philosophy, and especially *Siva Paratva Niroopanam*. *Sivarcana Candrika* was for the purpose of initiating Cinna Bomma into the worship of Siva, and on the completion of *Sivarkamani Dipika*, Cinna Bomma bathed the author in a profuse shower of gold, pouring the coins out of the vessel with his own hands (1582 A.D.). As became a selfless devotee Dikshitar utilised the gold for building the temple of Kalakanthesvara in his birth place, Adaiyapalam (Ins. 395/1911). In 1626 he was invited to Tirumalai Nayak's Court at Madura to arbitrate in a saiva-Vaishnava controversy. After an arbitration which decided in favour of Saivism, wheth took six months, he turned to Chidambaram to perform an Yagna and spend his last days. The sloka uttered by him while entering the sanctum of Lord Nataraja is well-Known.

As he uttered the words, he was beatified, as centuries before him St. Manikkavachakar was beautified in the same sanctum. (A.).

Saiva Revivalists from Ceylon

Coming nearer our own time, the services of certain saiva revivalists from Ceylon have been significant. It is nearly 320 years, since *Gnanaprakasar*, a saiva Vellala of Jaffna came to Chidambaram actually escaping out of the island to escapc the inquisitorial exaction of a cow for slaughter from each of the Saiva families, by the then Feringhee rulers. He established himself here, in the site of the present Jaffnese Colony in the eastern portion of the town. A number of families soon joined him and the colony grew.* Gnanaprakasa was learned, devout, and commanded the respect of the people. Some time, a Vaisya merchant whose large wealth was stolen away, approached him, to recover the lost treasure through his mystic powers; he agreed to help him. Gnanaprakasar got the clue through his *Upasana*, and with wealth given by the merchant, the present Gnanaprakasar tank was excavated. It is an extensive tank, formerly surrounded by a number of mutts and houses. Now, only a few of them remain, and the eastern-most part of it is the shrine of St. Sekkizhar. From here, Gnanaprakasar travelled widely, took to holy orders at the Tiruvannamalai adheenam, and brought out a number of works on Saiva philosophy in Sanskrit and in Tamil. Of these, his commentary on *Sivagnana Siddhiar* is one.

(A) J.O.R. 1928 p. 227. Heras-Aravidu Dynasty pp 523, 532, 55.

* There are still mutts: சங்காஜை மடம் *alias* வடக்கு மடம், செவ்வாய்க்கிழமை மடம், the Keezha matam of Varani adheenam, and many others occupied by Ceylonese families that migrated. Ssome of them are fast disappearing.

He has a mutt by the name, Sivapuri matam, near about Sekkizhar's shrine, wherein there is his statue in a sitting posture installed by his followers.

In the nineteenth century, and within comparatively recent times another revivalist appeared; *Arumukha Navalar (A. D. 1823—1879)* of the family of Gnanaprakasar. Christian missionaries were making conversions of Hindu families, and the Saiva fold in the land was without a leader. As a scholar of outstanding merit, and a forceful speaker, Navalar had no equal. Impelled by zeal to serve the cause of Saivism, and foster Tamil, so near his heart, he threw himself whole-heartedly into the work. He established the *Saiva Prakasa Vidyasala* in Chidambaram; to inculcate the tentes of Saivism, the Navalar Vidyanupalana Press in Madras was also founded from which he issued faultless Tamil publications of high literary and religious merit. His facile pen, brought out inimitable prose- versions of *Tiruvilaiyadal-puranam*, *Peria-puranam*, and *Kanda-puranam*. He also carefully reprinted about seventy of the most needed Texts and Commentaries. He passed away in 1879 after a strenuous service, devoting 32 years of his life to develop and spread Saiva literature and religion, by establishing schools and delivering lectures. His valued and enduring name and work will live cherished for all time.

The Vicissitudes of the Temple in the XVIII Century and After

During the latter half of the 18th century (1749-1784), for nearly 35 years, thetemple was used as a fort. It was in military occupation in the course of the Anglo-French wars in the Carnatic from 1753 to 1760,*** and later during the invasion of Haider Ali in the second Mysore war (1780-84), It suffered very seriously even under the earlier French occupation.

In 1780, the second Mysore war broke out, and the town and the temple were once again in military occupation for another four years till 1784. Haider occupied the temple in 1781 and improved its defences, placing a garrison in the pagoda, to maintain his line of communication with Pondicherry. The same year, Sir Eyre Coote attacked the pagoda, but was driven off to Porto Nove, from where he later gained the victory, that turned the tide of this critical war. This attack was probably on the western entrance.

*** In 1749 the ill-fated expedition under Captain Cope against Devicotta took shelter in the Chidambaram temple on its retreated to Fort St. David, In 1750, the armies of moraurl Rao and Moozaffur met here. In 1753 the French took the neighbouring fort of Bhoovanagerry (Bhuvanagiri) and occupied the Chidambaram pagoda on its being evacuated by the English garrison. They were in occupation of the shrine for several years till 1760, and greatly strengthened the western gateway. In the same year, French and Maharatta forces met at Chidambaram before marching to Trichinopoly. In 1759, an English attempt to capture the Pagoda failed- The temple had by now become a military base. The French garrison however surrendered in 1760 to the English and their Nawab Muhammad Ali Walajah. Bahadur". *Maual of Administration of the Madras Presidency. Vol III.* See also *History of Indostan,* (Vol, III. 1893) being a collection of maps and plans; A plan entitled "Chidambaram" and showing the fortifications intended and begnu by the French is well worth a study, as it discloses the alignment of the bastions and batteries projected for strengthening the outermost wall as for the utilisation of the storeyed corridors that lined the inside of the second wall and that now have gone into ruin in many portions.

The war scars suffered by the temple during these two great wars still stand; many of its mandapams and sanctums have disappeared, and many of its storeyed cloisters are irretrievably in ruins.

It was during this period of intermittent military occupations that there were breaks in worship in the temple**, and once Nataraja and Sivakama Sundari were moved from their sanctum to the present Sabhapati mandapam in the Tiruvarur temple, and after peace was restored brought back and re-installed here again in Chit Sabha in 1773 A. D. An inscription in grantha characters in the form of a sloka in the thousand-pillared mandapam refers to this fact, and says that it was in the year Saka 1695, Kali 4874, in the month of masi, Krishnapaksha, moolanakshatra-thriyodhasi thithi, that Nataraja came back to Chitsabha from Tiruvarur.

With peace and better times flowed more benefactions to the temple, some from Pachiyappa Mudaliar of Kanchi—whose educational endowments in South India are worthy of mention. He also built the Car-stand, renovated the temple cars, and revived the Car festivals. He also planned the reconstruction of the east gopuram which had become dilapidated. He died before he could begin it but this work was taken up and completed by his wife and his sister Subbammal.

Pachaiyappa Mudaliar had also induced during his time, his friend Manali Chinnaiah Mudaliar to endow large amounts to the temple for maintaining

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** தெளிவந் தயன்மா லறியாத தில்லைப்பதியம் பலவாணர்
புளியம் பொந்தினிடம் வாழும் புதுமை காட்டிப் பொருள்காட்டி
எளிதிற் புளியங் குடியானென் றிசைக்கும் பெருமை யேருழவர்
வளருங் குடியிற் பொலி வாழ்வு வளஞ்சேர் சோழமண்டலமே."
—சோழமண்டல சதகம்.

nandanavanas ; and for plating with silver of the Panchakshara steps leading into the innermost sanctum.

Still more recent benefactions are, by the great Nattukkottai Nagarathar community to this ancient fane. Their schemes of re-construction consisted of a thorough renovation of this temple. A great part of the funds for this purpose came from the V. S. family of Kanadukaththan ; of whom Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad, and his elder brother Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Chettiar have made an indelible mark in the history of the town and the temple. The Tiruppani was begun in the seventies of the last century on a magnificent scale, and the result has been the renovations of all the gopuras, the restoration of almost every shrine to its pristine grandeur including the covering with gold of the canopy of Nataraja, the repairs to the enclosure walls, the broadening of the stone steps and cloistered mandapas of the Sivaganga tank, and above all, the construction of the magnificent corridors round the second prakara. Besides, they have also instituted Ubayams and Kattalais in the temple, and renovated the cars, and provided a large number of vahanams and lamps. a number of vessels and other requirements, many of them silver for use in the daily service of the deities. The Kumbabishekam, after all these improvements, came off in 1891. These noble services have continued further for near a quarter of a century. Three generations of this noble house have unremittingly endeavoured to give of their best to the service of the Lord of Tillai ; and, in recognition of their devotion, silver images of parents of the Raja Sir M. Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad ; Muthiah Chettiar and

Meenatchee Achee ; and of his elder brother Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Chettiar holding votive lamps in their hands have been installed in the sanctum of of Lord Nataraja in Chit-Sabha.

Sixty four years after the last great event, the temple has again received on the 7th August 1955 a purificatory Kumbabishekam by the munificance of Adoor Ratnasabhapati Pillai, and the donations of devotees, the country round.

Shrines in and around Chidambaram

There are a number of shrines in the City, well laid out, with their places clearly designed to remind the pilgrim, the devotee and the resident of their purposeful place in religious life. There are twenty four Pillaiyar (Vinayaka) shrines found in the different parts of the town, each with its local traditions.

The Vedan Pillayar is first seen, as the pilgrim from the Chidambaram railway station crosses the Palaman bridge and enters the town towards the west. Here, it is said, the Lord appeared as a Vedan (hunter) and directed Hiranyavarman, the Pallava, to the Tirumoolattaneswara, then set amidst the ancient forest of Tillai trees.

Sengaluneer Pillayar is situated a furlong to the west of the former shrine ; the name is given after a channel which flowed nearby, where the Sengaluneer *nymphae (hodoratum)* flowers blossomed in abundance. The trunk of this Pillayar was broken during the Mussalman raids of Haider, a devotee proposed to replace the image ; the Lord appeared in a dream to him

and protested. The image remains even now with the arm maimed and the devotions of the people have been all the greater.

St. Sekkizhar's shrine is on the north-east corner of the Gnanaprakasam tank. It was raised at the spot as desired by Arumukha Navalar cf Ceylon. The canonised minister is seen in yogasana pose, with the cadjan palm leaves of his sacred work, *Tirut-tondar-puranam* in one of his hands.

Kamaleeswaran shrine takes its name after Goddess Lakshmi, who offered at this spot devotions to Lord Siva. The shrine faces west, and is located in the middle of the street of the name. There are also sanctums for Chandeswara and others deities.

Theradi Pillayar is a sub-shrine of Nataraja temple placed in line with the east sannidhi and gopuram.

Mariamman shrine located at the commencement of the first street, is known as the Keela-theru Mariamman being the guardian deity of the town on this eastern cardinal front.

Selliamman shrine is the temple of the guardian goddess on the south western corner of the town.

Kaliamman, is in the south sannidhi of Nataraja, at the western end of *Malaikatti* Street (formerly புகழாபரணர் திருவீதி). The goddess is in *Veerasana* pose with four hands, with *Soola* and *Kapala* in her hands.

Veerabadra Swami is a large and ancient shrine. Siva appears here as Virabadra to thwart the Daksha yaga.

Mukkuruni Pillaiyar, also known as *Muha-katta-nattu-Vinayaka* is a colossalVinayaka eight feet in height and exceedingly beautiful in form. The renovation of the shrine was made about forty years ago by the Nagarathars, and it is situate to the west of the southern gopuram and in the Rasakkal Tambiran tirumaligai tiruveedhi, the fourth and outer-prakaram of the temple.

Koottadum Pillaiyar has a shrine at the beginning of Pazhaya Saliyar street, three furlongs west of the western gopuram. The Vinayaka is seen in a dancing pose.

Tirup-puleechcharam or **Ilamai Yakkinar-Koil** is the shrine associated with Sts Tiruneelakanta Nayanar, and Kanampullar; also the former Tiruppuleechcharam where St. Vyaghrapada offered his *atmartha* pooja to the Lord. The deity is Sri Madhyanthaneswarar. The temple Yavvaneswarar, and the tank have in recent years been renovated largely by the Kottaiyur Nagarathars with an inner and outer prakara and they are, within a furlong to the west of the Nataraja temple.

It was in this tank that St. Tiruneelakantar and his wife, both old in years took a bath; (*vide infra* p. 102) for an account of the saint); and came out youth ful, and the Lord blessed them. The temple, in consequence is known as the Ilamai-Yakkinar-Koil. An annual festival is being conducted here on the natal asterism of the saint.

Naramukha Pillaiyar shrine is at the middle of South Car street in the city. The Pillaiyar has a human face, and the shrine faces west.

Madyantaneswara shrine is the one dedicated by Vyaghrapada's father, Madhyantana Rishi, when he came to meet his son. The shrine faces east, and is situated about a mile and a half, south of the city. Near by is a tank புலி மடு சூல தீர்த்தம் excavated by Vyaghrapada. Here, it is said, the sage conducted Vyaghrapada's marriage with a sister of sage Vasishta, and Upamanyu was born to them, and that the

heavenly sea of milk was brought here, on earth to feed the babe. The tank is the *Tirup-par-kadal*, now seen to the south east of the Tillaikkali temple.

Patanjali
Courtesy—Ananda Vikatan

Anantheeswara shrine is an ancient structure of modest proportions, on the eastern bank of the Nagacheri tank. It is the ancient ashram of Patanjali. Ananta Theertham, the temple tank is within, to the east of the shrine, and safely walled in on all sides. As the temple was in disrepair, renovation is in progress. Inscriptions of the Cholas Vijayalaya (A. D. 870) and Parantaka (A. D. 907-957) have recently been discovered on its walls. (See infra)

Tillaik-Kali, the temple of தில்லை வன முடைய பரமேசுவரி is in the northern-most limit of the city, the goddess being the guardian deity. Tillaik-kali temple is now an institution under the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act. *Siva-piriyai-teerttam,* the large temple tank, is towards the west and in front of the shrine. This is one of the sacred *tirthas* of Chidambaram.

The nucleus of this shrine for Tillaikkali, when she moved out of her ancient site, the present Nritta Sabha, was built here to its present proportions, by the Pallava Chief Kopperunjinga II. More than a dozen of Kopperunjinga's inscriptions are found on its walls,* registering gifts of land to the temple, for the maintenance of flower-gardens, gifts for a cow-stall திருக்கோ சாலை, provision for feeding and clothing fifty persons (தோப்புக் குடிகள்), employed for the maintenance of a flower-garden, gift of lands bought for 3,000 *Kasu* for digging a pond—Perumal Tiruvodai for growing flowers and for other benefactions.

SAIVA MUTTS

In the wake of the Samayacharyas, the Saiva renaissance gained a further impetus by the foundation of Saiva monasteries, known as *matam* (mutt) and *Kugai*, presided over by scholastics known as Sivacharyas. They were teachers learned in religious lore. They expounded the Saiva tenets and rules of moral conduct to disciples and those who thronged in numbers to hear. These mutts were as well charity houses, and also hospitals for the sick and the suffering. The heads of these mutts had a successive lineage of worthy descent from Guru to Sishya and received royal patronage. The popular esteem in which the institutions and the Tiruppadigams were held is seen in names in inscriptions as சிந்து பூந்துறை as a street name, சிவஞான வாய்க்கால் and திருந்துமா மறைப்பிலாறு as names of field-channels and rivulets, personal names as வேயுறு தோளி நாச்சி......(S. I. I. VIII Ins. 314) ஒளி வளர் விளக்கு V. 987; சிருடைக்கழல் (VII. 425), for females, and மறையணி தாவிஞன் and ஆணை நமதென்ற பெருமான் (Vol. III p. 653), for males.

Sekkizhar makes mention of such mutts in Tiruppugalur, Tiru-veezhimizhalai, Tiru-maraik-kadu (Vedaranyam) and Mathurai in his *Tiruttondar*

* INS. 397, 399, 395, 393, 392, 390, 391, 394 of 1903. also 398/1904, 312 of 1913.

Puranam ; and Chola and Pandya inscriptions refer to திருஞான சம்பந்தன் குகை, திருநாவுக்கரசர் மடம், திருத் தொண்டத் தொகையான் திருமடம், also branches of Golaki mutt in Tiruvorriyur and other places in Tamilakam from the 11th to 16th century (A.R.E. para 50, of 1923–24 and para 56 for 1935–36); a Esana Siva Ravalar Mutt in Tiruk-kodun-gunram (Piranmalai) in the time of Maravarman Sundara Pandya (A. R. E. para 24, 1929—30) also much earlier mutts of Rajaraja II and Rajendra III known as Tirumurai Tevara Selvan mutt at Tirukkazhumalam (Shiyali) Ins. t58/1911); Tirujnana Sambandar Mutt at Tiruvaga-theeswaram (Ins. 156 of 1911); one in Tiruvorriyur (Ins. 181 of 1912), and at Tiruvidaimarudur of a Mudaliar Maligai matam.

Of these mutts, a few have survived in the land, and those at Chidambaram are :

Tiruva-vaduthurai Adhinam Mutt (Ins. 3 of 1925) was founded by Silasri Arul Namasivaya Murtigal, early in the XV century at Tiruvavaduthrai, about 3 miles from Narasingampet railway station in Tanjavur district. A branch of the parental mutt is located in the original house of St. Umapati Sivam of Korra-vankudi in Malaikatti street. The mutt is now in renovation, and bears a statue of St. Meykanda Deva, the author of *Sivagnanabotham*.

Dharmapuram Adhinam Mutt was founded by Silasri Gurujnana Sambandar, in the second half of XVI century. It has a local branch in the Kasi Mutt street, south east of Chidambaram.

Sila Sri Gurujnana Sambandar was a mystic, and it is said that while on one of his visits to Chidambaram, and after *darsan* of Lord Nataraja, he sat in Yoga at the thousand pillared mandapam and lost all consciousness of time; it was past midnight, and goddess Sivakamasundari could not allow Her devotee to be starving. She set before him the offerings placed for Her, to appease the devotee's hunger. As thus blest, he was the author of *Sioabogasaram*, *Mukti-*

Nitchayam, *Chokkanatha Venba* and five other Saiva Siddhanta sastras. A sculptured figure of Sila Sri Guru Jnana Sambandar is installed in a shrine, in the compound of Tirupparkkadal tank and Mutt to the north west of Chidambaram.

Kasi Mutt founded by Silari Kumaragurupara Swamigal at Kasi (Banaras) in 17th Century and at Tiruppanandal in A.D. 1720. has its local branch in the street of the same name in the south eastern part of Chidambaram. Born of Saiva parents, at Srivaikuntam, the Founder was at the age of five, endowed with miraculous powers of speech by the Lord of Tiruchendur. His mystic powers and literary genius attracted Emperor Akbar at Delhi and Tirumalai Nayak at Madura, both of them endowed large properties to him, for religious foundations, which are flourishing. Of thirteen works ascribed to him, சிதம்பரம் மும்மணிக் கோவை and two others in praise of Lord Nataraja are of devotional and philosophical interest.

Mownaswami Mutt is a Veera Saiva Mutt over a century old, at the southern end of Sabhanayakar street near Ayeekulam. Silasri Sabhapati Tambiran is the present head of the mutt.

Vedanta Vicharanai Mutt in Mannargudi street is a branch of the Kovilur mutt in Ramnad district. One of the early heads of the mutt, Silasri Ponnambala Swamigal is credited with an elaborate commentary on *Kaivalyam*.

Chidambaram Esanya Matam is a Saiva mutt. a century old, in the northern end of Theradi-Pillaiyar street, founded by Esanya Ponnambala Gnana Desikar. Silasri Bommapuram Ramalinga swami, the second head of the mutt first published the two *Prabandhas* of Sivaprakasa Swamigal and Kumaragurupara Swamigal, about 75 years ago at the instance of Prof. Poondi Ranganatha Mudaliar of the Presidency Cellege. Tiru Arutpragasa Vallalar Chidambaram Ramalinga Swamigal stayed a few years here, before he founded the Gnana Sabha at Vadalur.

Agora Sivachariar Mutt in the western limits of the town at the southern end of Anantheeswaran Koil *agrahara* is a mutt founded by Agora Sivachariar of Golaki santhanam, and one of the eighteen pattathi Sivacharyas (Ins. 303 of 1906) held in esteem by the Saiva fold. It is now presided over by a descendant of the founder.

Arubattumoovar Matam in the south car street of Chidambaram is by the க. பு. Nagarathar family of Pallattur, the endowment of which are used for a daily worship to a shrine where there is a painted panel of sixty-three Saiva Nayanmars; and for a feeding on all particular days of the natal asterisms of all the saints.

Tirupparkadal Mutt

This mutt is a Veera saivite foundation, like the Ambalathadi Mutt. It is situate almost on the northern verge of the town very near Tillai amman Koil. The mutt is famous as the very site where the actual writing down of the manuscript of *Tiruvachakam* took place. Saint Manickavachakar was temporarily sojourning here *incognito*.

While on his visits to worship Sri Nataraja, Siva visited him as an old Brahman and wrote down *Tiruvachakam* and *Tirukkovaiyar* to the dictation of the Saint himself and disappeared. The next morning the Tillai Moovayiravar found a manuscipt on the footsteps near Nataraja, purported to have been written by Tiruchitrambalam Udaiyan to the dictation of Manivachagan. The amazed Three-thousands approached the saint in his seclusion in this Mutt and begged of him to reveal the meaning of his *Tiruvachakam* and *Tirukkovaiyar*. He accompanied them to the sanctum of the Temple and pointing at Sri Nataraja as the meaning, he disappeared into the splendrous Jyothi. This Mutt has this incident carved in stone in its sanctum. This is the Tirupperunturaik-Koyil. The whole place is in the worst imaginable condition and the desecration of this holy spot that is

going on now must be arrested and the whole Mutt must be renovated and guarded. At the entrance to the mutt, lies the Tirupparkadal tank.

Ambalathadi Mutt

Situate towards the north-west of the town in a lane running behind and parallel to the North Car street of the name, the Ambalathadi Mutt is as old as the 8th Century A.D. After Saint Manickavachakar had pointed to the raised foot of Lord Nataraja as the import and inner meaning of his *Tiruvachakam* and after his instantaneous dissolution into the Jyoti of Siva, there arose a dispute between the Tillai Three Thousand Dikshitas and the then King of the land regarding the ownership of the original manuscript of *Tiruvachakam* as written by Siva Himself. A heavenly voice ended that quarrel by announcing that the manuscript must be cast into the Sivaganga tank and that the person near whom on its shore the manuscript approaches floating, should own it. But strangely enough, when the manuscript was accordingly set afloat, it reached neither the Tillai Andanars nor the King, but it went straight near an old Brahman who was performing puja on the bank of Sivaganga. That Brahman became its owner and he graciously made out two more copies and gave one to the Tillai Assembly and the other to the King. But he carried the original manuscript away and settling down at the present spot of Ambalathadi Mutt, appointed a Saiva as the Head of that Mutt, put him in charge of the Mutt and the manuscript and disappeared. He was then seen to be Siva Himself. It was the will of that founder that the Heads of that Mutt should never be barefooted. and that their feet must be worshipped with all love and honour due to his crown. Hence it is called Sri Padhapujai Ambalathadi Mutt.

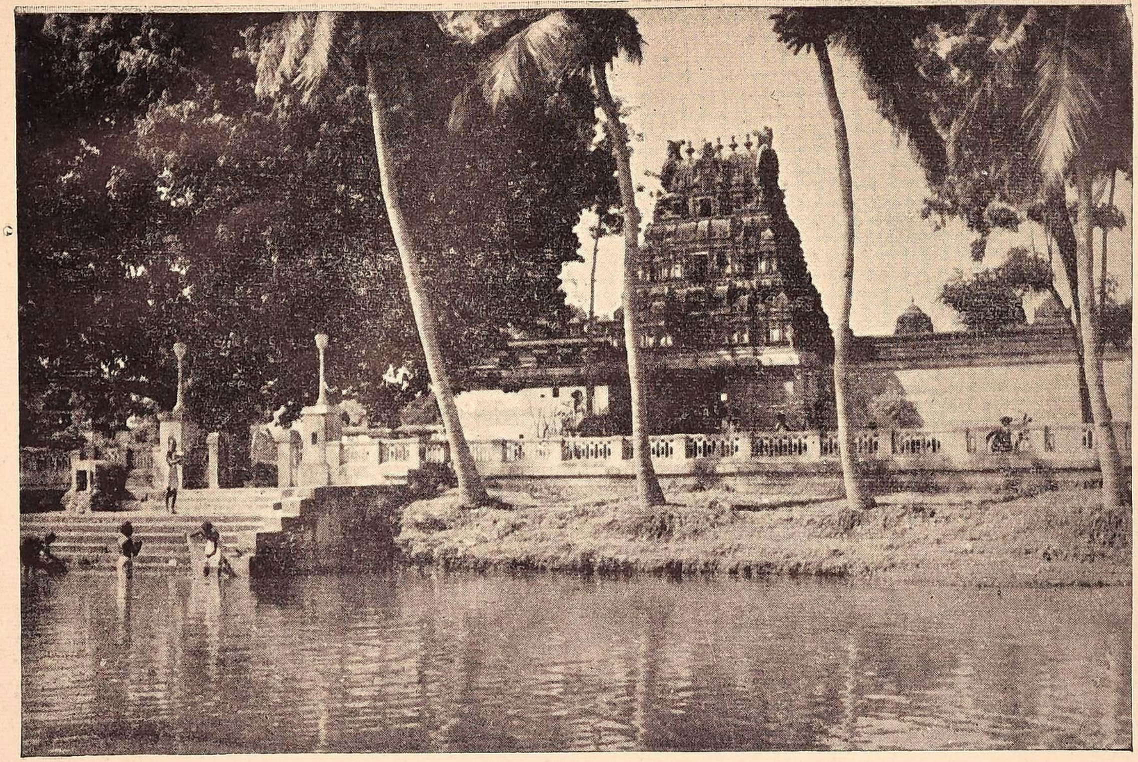
There is a Kuruntha tree growing in the mutt, and the shrine is for Lord Nataraja. Daily puja is being offered to the original manuscript of *Tiruvachakam*

which is kept fully covered and safe in a silver casket. It is said that one who attempted to uncover and read the manuscript became purblind and hence no one dares to experiment with it. The headquarters of the Mutt is at Pondicherry with as many as 24 branches, and the Tillai Mutt is famous though in a very dilapidated condition. Its present head Silasri Tirunavukkarasu Swamigal is an enthusiastic person who is making attempts to restore the ancient glory of the Mutt. A panchaloka icon of Saint Manickavachakar, which is being daily worshipped by the Mutt's head is a charming and remarkable figure of the Saint.

Tiruk-kalanjeri

North-West of Chidambaram, surrounded by green fields and running channels, Tirukkalanjeri also known as Singarattottam is a hamlet of a few houses. Here lived about 700 years ago St. Maraignana Sambandar, the third Santhana acharya of the Saiva Siddhanta school, and the spiritual preceptor of St. Umapati Sivam of Korravankudi. The village com mon bears a Vinayaka shrine and the samadhi of St- Maraignana Sambandar. It is a small cubicular cell. Near by, is the Brahma Tirtha tank of the Siva temple : Bhimeswara Udaya Nayanar, founded by Bhimavarman son of Pallava Simhavarman III. The principal and sub shrines standing within a spacious inner court are much in disrepair. Two Inscriptions No. 262 and 263 of 1913 of Kulottunga III found on its north wall, (A) are interesting as records of the village assembly of Perumbarrappuliyur and the

(A) That from the 2nd year and 125th day of Kulottunga III as per order of the King; the assessed land (Taram-perra-nilam) standing in the name of the Subrahmanya Pillayar shrine in the Arunmozhi-Iswaram temple of this village-be included with those of the latter, the lands declared to be superior to the 8th class be asssed as per those of the 8th class and those below the 8th class be allowed to continue as before, and that the site of the temple of Tiru-thondath-thogai Iswaramudayar, its enclosures, premises and the sacred tank till now included in the account of assessed



Sri Pasupadeswarar Tiruvetkalam Temple, Annamalainagar.

powers enjoyed by the local committee in the matter of land Survey and assessments.

Tiruvetkalam[1] is a village about two miles east of Chidambaram. Here, a modern University town with all amenities has grown out of the scattered houses of the old Nattam ; a lot of expansion, improvement and town planning has resulted in a beautiful colony for scholars and teachers pursuing their cultural and scientific pursuits.

There is a shrine for Pasupadeswarar and Goddess Nallanayaki, which may be called the "University shrine" for the spiritually minded to worship. The temple is sung by Sts. Jnana Sambandar and Appar in *Tevaram*, also St. Arunagiri in two verses in *Tiruppugazh*. The place celebrates the advent of Lord Siva as a hunter and the award of Pasupathastram toArjuna, in appreciation of his skill and penance[2]. St Appar

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(*Contd.*)

land be removed from the register. The order was executed by the land Suvey Committee (Nilam-alavuppadu-perumakkal.) Another inscription dated in his 17th year reeords a gift of 1100 Kasu to cover the expenses of oil, wick and lighting charges of a lamp in the temple of *Tirukkalanjeri Udaiyar* at Perumbarrappuliyur. It is stipulated that the persons with whom the amount was deposited for interest had to produce the capital every fifth year before the *mulapurasaiyar*, the Stanikas and the managers of the temple. Perhaps, it was due to the general want of confidence in the people due to the unsettled state of the country (Ins. 264 of 1913.).

1. About 35 years ago, this was a hamlet of a few houses, a dilapidated shrine, its garbha-griha in ruins and no habitation round about except that of the Gurukkal-the priest.

Ins. 259 of 1913 on a slab lying near the Pasupadeswara temple at Tiruvetkalam records the gift of this village of Tiruvetkalam to the shrine of Chidambaram and Sivakamasundari amman of the Tirumulastanam temple by Achyuthappa Nayaka, son of Siru-Sevappa Nayaka, the first of the Tanjavur Nayak Kings. (A.D. 1566) for the merit of Tirumalairajayan i.e. the Karnataka King Tirumalai I.

2. The traditious of the temple as where Arjuna sat in penance and Lord Siva appeared as a (வேடன்) hunter and tried the prowess of the devotee is associated with several place-names nearby: உசுப்பூர் where the Lord roused the boar out of his lair;

speaks of the shrine as "வேடனுருரை வேட்களம்" "the place where Vetanar lives." The term 'Vetanar' meaning hunter, evidently refers to Siva as Kirata and the local tradition of Vetkalam, being the abode of Vetanar took shape in the days of St. Appar.

St. Jnana Sambandar refers to Vetkalam in his verses.

" ஓதமுங் கானலுஞ் சூழ்தரு வேலை
யுள்ளங் கலந்திசை யாலெழுந்த
வேதமும வேள்வியு மோவா
வேட்கள நன்னக ராரே"
" திரைபுல்கு தெண்கடறண்கழி யோதந்
தேனலங் கானலில் வண்டுபண் செய்ய
விரைபுல்கு பைம்பொழில் சூழ்ந்த
வேட்கள நன்னக ராரே". —Tevaram.

as being situate near the sea and where the Vedas, and the chanting of the hymns and *Velvi*, the sacrifices were going on.

Between Tiruvctkalam and the sea, there is now a distance of $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles, the land-in-between being separated from the sea by a lagoon, a small reserve forest and the east coast canal connecting Madras and Tirumullaivasal. Because of the sandy nature of the soil it is possible that sometime, in the past between now and 1300 years ago it should have formed the bed of the river Coleroon in flood and a swollen sea.

The metal icons of Siva as Kiratarjuna murti[2] and Parvati, and of Arjuna are of exquisite form. The

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(*Contd.*)

நக்கர் உகந்த குடி–நக்கத்தங்குடி where the Lord Siva was pleased to have combat with Arjuna அர்ச்சுனனுல் வில்லடிபட்ட இறைவன் உகந்த இடம்; ஈசன் போர் வெளி where Siva fought with Arjuna; வில்லிறுத்தான் குட்டை. where the Lord drew the bow and broke it during His fight; and சங்கரன் குட்டை—a pond dug with the heel of the Lord—places identified now and associated with the incidents of the puranic version. See *Kratarjuniya* by Poet Bharavi, also *Mahabharatam* Vanaparvam, Kirataparvam Chaps 37–39, also J. I. S. O. A-on Kiratarjuna by Sri. T. N. Ramachandran.

2. Journal of the Annamalai University III. i. 1934 p. 28–47.

Kirata icon is assigned to the Pallava period, some time earlier to that of St. Appar, and the latter to the end of the later Cholas. These were recovered from a mound, a few yards southwards of the shrine, and installed later.

The Tiruvetkalam temple as it stands today is a tiny beautiful structure with the beautiful Krupa-kataksha tank in front, the renovations and the structures in granite are due to the munificence of Rajah Sir M. Annamalai Chettiar, the founder of the University and his illustrious brothers who took a personal interest in the construction.

Tirukkazhippalai. The shrine dedicated to Siva Sri Palavannanadeswarar and Goddess Vedanayaki was sung by the three apostles Sts. Sambandar, Appar and Sundarar, in the 7th and 8th centuries. St. Sambandar's two decads speak of Kazhippalai as கடல் நண்ணு கழிப்பதி, கறையார் பொழில்சூழ் கழிப்பாலை and உவர் கொண்ட கழிப்பதி as near the sea. and calls upon mankind to devotion to the Lord of Kazhippalai, to be rid of earthly ills.

St. Appar gives five decads. He also refers to the sea approach of the shrine as கழியுலாஞ் சூழ்ந்த கழிப்பாலை ; and in his verses in *Ahatturai* matter, refers to its நெய்தல் environments, the several aspects of the Lord as hero, and says that the human soul as the heroine should aspire to and approach Him in the path of *Siva neri*.

"நெய்தற் குருகுதன் பிள்ளையென்
றெண்ணி நெருங்கிச் சென்று
கைதை மடற்புல்கு தென்கழிப்
பாலையத னுறைவாய்
பைதற் பிறையொடு பாம்படன்
வைத்த பரிசறி யோம்
எய்தப் பெறினிரங் காதுகண்
டாய் நம் மிறையவனே"—அப்பர்.

St. Sundarar's decad is reminiscent of his life-events, refering to விலையாவணம். It is a reference the saint being reclaimed by Siva as His bond slave.

"ஒழிப்பா யென்வினையை யுகப்பாய் முனிந்தருளித்
தெழிப்பாய் மோதுவிப்பாய் விலையாவணமுடையாய்
கழிப்பால் கண்ட டங்கச் சுழியேந்து மாமறுகிற்
கழிப்பா லமருவும் கனலேந்து கையானே."

The temple, on its ancient site Karaimedu, on the northern bank of the Coleroon, seven miles south east Chidambaram was washed away by the Coleroon floods of years ago. The remains were brought to the present site by Padugai Palaniappa Mudaliar, and the shrine is built anew by Ar. Ar. Arunachalam Chettiar of Devakottah. It now stands in Sivapuri village, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles south east of Chidambaram.

Tirunelvayil also known as Nelvayil-aratturai is the modern Sivapuri about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles south east of Chidambaram. It is set amidst a vast expanse of paddy fields. Siva is here named Utchinatheswara and the Goddess Kanakambujai. The temple was visited and sung by St. Jnanasambandar. The decad of verses are an nvocation to the Lord நெல் பயங்கும் நெல்வாயில் ஈசன், idescribes his many aspects and calls upon—விண் பயன் கொளும் வேட்கையாளர்—devotees who aspire for His grace, to think of Him and be blessed. St. Arunagiri gives also a verse in praise of the Lord. The temple stands fully renovated by a Nagarathar Tiruppanidar, K. V. S. Vr. Alagappa Chettiar. Sekkizhar mentions that St. Appar sojourned here during his visits to Chidambaram for worship of Lord Nataraja.

Devotional Literature bearing on the Temple.

The following list gives names of the Saiva Hymnists and authors, who by their writings have associated themselves with the Lord of Tillai.

அம்பலக்கூத்தர்			" கைச்சீட்டு "
திருமூலர்	கி. பி. 5 நூ.		திருமந்திரம்—திருவம்பலச் சக்கரம் —திருக்கூத்து தரிசனம்
திருநாவுக்கரசர்	vii நூ.		83 பாடல்கள்
திருஞானசம்பந்தர்	vii நூ.		22 பாடல்கள்
ஐயடிகள் காடவர் கோன்	670-685	பரமேஸ்வர வர்மன் I	தனிப்பாடல்கள்
சுந்தரமூர்த்தி சுவாமிகள்	கி. பி.		10 பாடல்கள்
மகோதை—கார் கொண்ட வள்ளல் சேரமான் பெருமாள்	685-720		பொன்வண்ணத் தந்தாதி
மாணிக்க வாசகர்	790-830	வரகுண பாண்டியன் I	திருவாசகம் திருக்கோவையார்
பட்டினத்தார்	கி. பி. ix நூ.		கோயில் நான் மணிமாலை
சிவஞான கண்டராதித்தர்	949-957		திருவிசைப்பா 10
காவிரிப்பூம்பட்டினம் சேந்தனார்	985		திருப்பல்லாண்டு 13
திருவாவடுதுறை திருமாளிகைத் தேவர்			திருவிசைப்பாப் பதிகம்
புருஷோத்தம நம்பி	985-1010		திருவிசைப்பா 22
திருமயிலை திருவாலியமுதனார்—			,, 42
வேணாட்டடிகள்			,, 10
பூந்துருத்தி நம்பி காட நம்பி			,, 11
கருவூர்த்தேவர்	985-1044		,, 11
சேதிராயர்			,, 10
கல்லாடர்	XI நூ.		தனிப்பாடல்கள்
நம்பியாண்டார் நம்பி	985-1016	ராசராசன் I	கோயிற்றிருப்பண்ணியர் திருவிருத்தம், திருத்தொண்டர் அந்தாதி, 11வது திருமுறையில் 10 பிரபந்தங்கள்

குன்றத்தூர் சேக்கிழார்	1178–1216	குலோத்துங்கன் III	திருத்தொண்டர் புராணம் 4286 பாக்கள்
உமாபதி சிவாச்சாரியர்	1290–1340		கோயிற் புராணம் திருத்தொண்டர் புராணசாரம்— சேக்கிழார் புராணம்— கொடிக்கவி சிவப்பிரகாசம் முதலியன
இரட்டையர்	1340–1360	சொக்கராயன்	தில்லைக் கலம்பகம்
அருணகிரிநாதர்	1406–1465	பிரபுட தேவமாராயன்	சிதம்பரம்—திருப்புகழ் 65 பாக்கள்
காளமேகப் புலவர்	1455–1468	திருமலை ராயன்	7 பாக்கள்
குருஞானசம்பந்தர்	1580		சிவபோக சாரம்— சொக்கநாத வெண்பா முத்தி நிச்சயம்
தில்லைப் புராணத் திருமலை நாதர்	1473–1506		சிதம்பர புராணம்
கும்பகோணம் சித்தர் சிவப் பிரகாசர்	XVI நூ		அத்துவித வெண்பா
ஸ்ரீகாளத்தி கண் கட்டி மறைஞானர் (குகைமடம்)	1520-1560		சிவதருமோத்தரம் சைவ சமயநெறி
தொண்டைநாட்டு சொக்கநாதப் புலவர்			தனிப்பாடல்கள்
அப்பைய தீக்ஷிதர்	1553–1626	ராமராயர், திருமலைநாயக்கர்	108 சமஸ்கிருத நூல்கள்
வெள்ளியம்பல வாணர்	!680–1710		மிருகேந்திர ராகமம் முத்திநிக்ஷய பாஷ்யம் ஞானவாண விளக்கம்
படிக்காசுத் தம்பிரான்	1686–1723		தனிப்பாடல்கள்
தொண்டைநாட்டு சொக்கநாதப் புலவர்	,,		நடராஜனைப்பற்றிய தனிப்பாடல்கள்
ஸ்ரீகாழி முத்துத்தாண்டவர்			கீர்த்தனங்கள்
யாழ்ப்பாணம் ஞானப்பிரகர்சர்	xvii நூ.		சித்தியார் உரைகள்

குமரகுருபர சுவாமிகள்	xvii நூ.	திருமலைநாயக்கர்	1. சிதம்பர மும்மணிக் கோவை 2. சிதம்பரச் செய்யுட் கோவை 3. சிவகாமியம்மை இரட்டை மணிமாலை
கடம்பன் குடி பலபட்டடைச் சொக்கநாதப் புலவர்	XVIII நூ.		தனிப்பாடல்கள்
தில்லை விடங்கன் மாரிமுத்தாப் புலவர்			புலியூர் வெண்பா புலியூர் நொண்டி நாடகம், சிதம்பரேசுவரர் விறலி விடுதூது
தாயுமானவர்	–1742	விஜய ரகுநாத சொக்கலிங்க நாயக்கர்	பாடல்கள்
நரிமணம் கோபாலகிருஷ்ண பாரதி			நந்தனார் கீர்த்தனை சிதம்பர கும்மி
திரிசிரபுரம் மீனாட்சிசுந்தரம் பிள்ளை			திருத்தில்லை யமக அந்தாதி
நல்லூர் ஆறுமுக நாவலர்	1823–1879		சிதம்பர மகான்மியம்
வடலூர் இராமலிங்க சுவாமிகள்	1823–1874		திருவருட்பா பாடல்கள்

Appendix I

THE HOUSE OF GOD*

"YE ARE THE TEMPLES OF GOD"

By

J. M. Nallaswami Pillai, B.A., B.L.

"ஆதியாய் நடுவுமாகி யளவிலா அளவுமாகிச்
சோதியாய் உணர்வுமாகித் தோன்றிய பொருளுமாகிப்
பேதியா யேகமாகிப் பெண்ணுமா யாணுமாகிப்
போதியா நிற்குந்தில்லைப் பொதுநடம் போற்றிபோற்றி."

—சேக்கிழார்.

O, Thou, the Beginning, the Middle, the Limitless Limit,
The Light, and the Wisdom, and All Things Manifest,
The Indivisible One, The Female and the Male.
Glory, Glory to Thy Dance in Tillai,
The Intellectual Region of Universalism.

"கற்பனை கடந்த சோதி கருணையே யுருவமாகி
அற்புதக் கோலநீடி யருமறை சிரத்தின்மேலாம்
சிற்பர வியோமமாகுந் திருச்சிற்றம் பலத்துள்நின்று
பொற்புட னடஞ்செய்கின்ற பூங்கழல் போற்றிபோற்றி."

—சேக்கிழார்.

O, Thou, the Light from which speech and thought turn back,
The very Form of Grace, The Wonderful Presence,
The Crown resting on the rare Vedasiras,
In the beautiful Chit-Sabha of Chit-Para-Vyoma,
Thou dost dance delightedly. Glory, Glory, to Thy tinkling Foot.

"குன்றாத மூவுருவாய் அருவாய் ஞானக்
கொழுந்தாகி யறுசமயக் கூத்து மாடி
நின்றாயே மாயையெனும் திரையை நீக்கி
நின்னையா ரறியவல்லார் நினைப்போர்நெஞ்சம்,
மன்றாக வின்பக்கூத் தாடவல்ல
மணியேயென் கண்ணே மாமருந்தே நால்வர்க்
கன்றாலின் கீழிருந்து மோனஞான
மமைத்த சின்முத்திரைக் கடலே யமரரேறே."

—தாயுமானவர்.

O Thou Imperishable Triple Form, and Formless! O Thou Supreme,
Intelligence working steadfast in the six forms of Religion!
Who could know Thee after raising the curtain of Maya?

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* Studies in Saiva Siddhanta, 1911, Pp. 13-20.

By Kind Courtesy of H.H. Silasri Maha-sannidhanam Avergal of Dharmapuram Saiva Adheenam.

Thou dost dance in the hearts of Those who think of Thee,
Thou art the Priceless Jewel; Thou my eye;
Thou, the Supreme Panacea;
Thou the Ocean of Chinmudra Wisdom,
Who didst teach the four ancient sons,
Mauna Jnana from under the Sacred Banyan Tree
Thou, the Deva of Devas.

The first two verses we quote from Sekkilar's Periyapuranam and the last from Saint Tayumanavar, in praise of the famous Temple at Chidambaram and the sacred mysteries contained therein. We have elsewhere observed that even if we have lost our books on Veda and Vedanta, we could evolve the whole thing again from the symbols we possess, provided we had the tiny key to unlock these sacred mysteries. The hoariest and most ancient wisdom is thus enshrined in these unmistakable symbols, and when we understand them aright, we are enabled to test and know which is the true Philosophy and which is the true Religion, surrounded as we are today by a multitude of Religions and Philosophies conflicting in themselves and yet claiming to be the most ancient and the truest. It is the most unfortunate thing, in India and in Indian Religion, that the same books and the same texts furnish the authority and the sanction for every existing phase of belief and thought, and when this fact is coupled with such a blind ignoring of what is past and what is modern, and when the materials for applying such an historical test are not very considerable, the task of deciding which is the true interpretation and which is false, is rendered very difficult, though not impossible, and the value of a test as indicated above, cannot be lost sight of. In interpreting documents, the rule ought no doubt to be, that where the words are plain and unambiguous, the plain meaning of the words ought to be made to prevail, and no casuistry could be allowed to mar the effect of its plain meaning. It is only when the words are ambiguous, any interpretation as to its real meaning by other evidence is permissible at all. Then, again, when we begin to enquire into the truth of any particular custom and tradition, we find how difficult it is to arrive at an uniform conclusion, when we have to rely on mere oral evidence; and any documentary evidence (we use it in the strictly legal sense) if available, is of the utmost importance, and the older the document, the greater the value thereof. Then, again, consider the difference between the verbal accounts of a dozen people who witnessed a particular scene all at the same time, and the actual scene photographed by an ordinary Kodak. We might be sure to discover discrepancies and contradictions in the oral testimony, though it might be perfectly honest. Of course, there might be exceptionally trustworthy witnesses, as there might be untrust-worthy cameras. The test we have proposed

above may, as such, be seen to possess all the elements of an old and ancient document, and a trusty camera. And the more so, when we know, as a matter of fact, that the written language of the primitive mankind consisted of pictures only. The most ancient Sumerian, tht Chaldean, the Egyptian and the Chinese were all pictorial languages; and it is well known that these were the people who have tried to leave their highest thoughts on religion and philosophy behind them, in pictures and statues and monuments.

In proceeding therefore to unravel the mysteries connected with our symbolism, we must confess that the task is not one which we can conscientiously think of adequately discharging. In attempting the impossible therefore, we have no other excuse than the one which sage Sekkilar had before him:

" அளவு கூடவுரைப் பரிதாயினும்
அளவிலாசை துரப்ப வறைகுவேன்,"

"Though impossible to reach its limits, Insatiate love drives me to the task".

Before we do so however, we have to get clear of two sets of men, the cry of Sectarianism, and the other, with the catch-word who pester us often with their cant. One of such will raise Revivalism.

There are some very estimable people belonging to both these classes, we admit as well as their sincerity, but with most it is all mere cant, pure and unmitigated cant. They believe neither in the one nor in the other; they have neither inclination nor wish to study and think, and pause and enquire into the truth of things. They are themselves sectarians, so blind that they will not acknowledge themselves to be such. They start with the inborn conviction that this is trash and they have no patience with those who will honestly differ from them, and they clutch **at a word, a phrse, to kick up a dust, with the evident object of besmearing the other side. No doubt, there is a sort of scepticism which we prize much the scepticism which will lead one to doubt and inquire into the truth of things and not to scorn and scoff at every** scepticism which will lead one to doubt and inquire into the truth of things. We prize much, and not to scorn and scog at everything. And in our inmost heart, we do not wish to wound the feelings of a single person, of whatever shade of opinion he may belong to. And is not the present enquiry solely devoted to reach 'the region of universalism', devoted to reach where, in the words of our Sage Tayumanavar,

" பகர்வரிய தில்லை மன்றுட் பார்த்த போதங்கு
என்மார்க்க மிருக்கு தெல்லாம். வெளியேயென்ன
எச்ச மயத்தவர்களும், வந்திறைஞ் சாநிற்பர் ?"

every religionist comes and bows in adoration of the One Supreme, saying they see no symbols of any creed but all AKAS? And he

states in the previous lines that he reached this region, after looking in vain in every creed and in every path for that Pure Spirit which seeks to reconcile with the path of noblest knowledge, all the bitter conflicting creeds and religions,

> "சன்மார்க்க ஞானமதின் பொருளாம்வீறு
> சமய சங்கேதப் பொருளுந்தா னொன்றாகப்
> பன்மார்க்க நெறியினிலும் கண்டதில்லை."

And the place is worth a trial visit even today, for does not Tayumanavar record his experience, his stony heart melted into love and bliss, the moment he saw the holy Presence?

> "கன்மார்க்க நெஞ்சமுள வெனக்கும் தானே
> கண்டவுட னானந்தம் காண்ட லாகும்."

This has not been his experience only, of believers alone. Ages back, scoffers and atheists have felt the power of this Presence, and it is recorded of the great Atheiest Guru, Jaimini, that when he approached, all his unbelief left him, and he composed his song of *Vedapadastava*. And though there are thousands of temples all over the land, the heart of every true believer has always turned, with love and longing, to this Centre Spot. And it is believed that Chidambaram occupies a central geographical position between the northern and southern extremes of India, including Ceylon. And corresponding to this position in the microcosm, Arumukha Navalar observes that, in the human microcosm also, the place points to the region of Sushumna between Ida and Pingala Nadis. Here is another centre of heat and vitality and light in the human body, and that is the heart. And the heart is the most vital and delicate organ in the whole system. Every other organ requires its help for its nourishment and upkeep. It is saved and protected from many an ill, by its position, which every other organ is exposed to; but that is because that, whereas life can be prolonged even after injury to every other organ, life ebbs away the instant the heart is injured. And then, is not the heart, the seat of love, love pure and undefiled? Pity, kindness, mercy, grace, are all different shades of this one Love, அன்பு, Bhakti, faith, Is there anything else that can compete with this Supreme Principle? Knowledge, you may exclaim, with its seat in the brain. We dare say, 'not'. The slightest injury to the heart completely paralyses the brain. And the pulsation in the brain itself rises and falls with the beat of the heart itself. It is the one organ in the body which is ever active and knows no rest, when everything else, including the brain undergoes rest. And in human nature also, what is there which love cannot quicken? It can give life to the despairing and the lifeless, strength to the weak, courage to the coward; and instances have

not been wanting to show what extraordinary feats of intellect, love has been the cause of. The whole world is bound by the heart, much more than by the intellect alone. And Mrs. Humphrey Ward has portrayed in glowing words the difference between the man of the intellect and the man of the heart in her *Robert Elsemere*. There, the man of the intellect pines, in secret and in his pride, for that very touch which make the whole world kin. And it is in this heart, all mankind have liked to build a temple for the Most High. And the only requisite is, that this heart be pure. And the moment this heart is pure, there the light from the Invisible Akas will shine, dispelling the darkness that blinds the eye, and enabling it to see.

"வெளியான நின்மன வெளியூடு விரவினையா
வெளியாரும் கண்ணா மிரவியும போனின்று லாவுவன் காண்"

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God". Said the Lord Jesus. And the sage who composed the *Taittiriya* Upanishat sang long before him: *"Satyam Jnanam anantam Brahma, Yo Veda nihitam guhayam Paramevyoman, Sosnute sarvan Kamantasaha, Brahmana vipaschiteti"*.

He who knows Brahman which is *sat,* which is *Chit* and which is endless (Bliss), as hidden in the cave (of the heart) in the highest Akas, he enjoys all blessings as one with the Omniscient Brahman." And the most mystical and oldest of the Upanishats, the *Chhandogya* also repeats the same instruction. "Would you like to know what that one thing is, which you have to search for and to know? And when you have to search for it, how to know it? Hear! There is the Brahmapura (body), and in it, the Dahara (palace) of the lotus (Pundarika) of the heart, and, in it, that Antar-Akasa. Now, what exists in this Akasa. That is to be sought after. That is to be understood.

"As large as this Akasa is, so large is that Akasa within the heart. Both heaven and earth are contained in it; both Fire and Air; both Sun and Moon; both Lightning and Stars; and what? ever there is of Him in this world, and whatever is not, all that, is contained within it". (VIII, 1-123). In an earlier chapter, this Supreme Being is called "The Intelligent, Whose body is Prana, Whose form is light (Jyotis), Whose thoughts are true, Who is like the Akasa (omnipresent and invisible), from Whom all works all desires, all sweet odours, and tastes, proceed; the Atma within the heart,. smaller than a grain of rice, smaller than a grain of barley, smaller than a mustard-seed, smaller than a canary-seed, or the kernel of a canary-seed; also the Atma within the heart, greater than the Earth, greater than the Sky, greater than the Heaven, greater than all these Worlds." (III. 14.223). In a later

passage, the Upanishat says that "He who is called Akasa is the revealer of all forms and names: That within which these form and names are contained, is the Brahman, the Immortal, the Atma, "(VIII. 13-1). The following verse occurs in the *Katha* (I. 2.20), the *Svetasvatara* (III. 20) and the *Taittiriyama-hopanishat* and the same is reproduced in the *Siva-mahapurana*.

"Smaller than small, yet greater than great, in the heart (Guha) of this creature, Atma or Isa doth repose: That, free from desire, He sees, with His grief gone, the Lord and His might, by His favour". In the *Kaivalyopanishat*, the same is reproduced, in the following words: "Beyond the heavens, yet shining in the heart (Guha) of his creatures, Him the sages, free from desire, reach." Sri Krishna also imparts this most secret of secrets to his pupil. "That Isvara dwelleth in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna, by his maya, causing all, beings to revolve, as though mounted on a potter's wheel", and importunes him to flee to Him to secure Supreme Peace by His Grace. The manner of occupying this seat or dwelling place is elsewhere referred to, in the XIIIth and IXth discourses, 32nd and 6th verses respectively, and these three or four verses bring out the whole of the Upanishat thoughts. "As the Omnipresent Akasa is not soiled, by reason of its subtlety, so seated everywhere in the body, the Self is not soiled." The support of beings, and not routed in beings, my Atma is their efficient cause; as rooted in the akasa, the mighty air moves everywhere, so all things rest, rooted in me." This Supporter, Permitter, Spectator and Enjoyer, is styled Mahesvara, Paramatman and Parama-Purusha, in verse 22, Chapter XIII. Another verse in the *Chhandogya* says that Gayatri is the body and the heart, because in it all the spirits are established. No wonder, therefore, that in almost every page of the Tamil Veda, and the writings of the later Tamil Saints, God's truest dwelling place, His house, His palace, His seat, is universally referred to as the human heart. "நினைப்பவர் மனமே கோயிலாக்கொண்டவர்"

And so it is that the famous Shrine we are speaking of, is, by pre-eminence called திருக்கோயில்* "The beautiful House," inasmuch as it is also called the "Pundarika Vidu" புண்டரீகவீடு

*It is interesting to note that the chief Temple in Mecca is called 'al Caaba', literally meaning, 'The House, and the Hebrew word for the great Temple at Jerusalem also meant simply, 'The House,' "The House of God."

"the House of lotus," or *"Dahara Vidu"* also. And, today, we will stop, after identifying this Golden Palace in Chidambaram with the "Human Heart" spoken of in the most ancient writings, and we will speak of the Great King and Lord, Who is the Dweller in this Palace and His characteristics, in a future issue.[2]

LOTUS OF THE HEART

[2] If the real nature of the *'Lotus of the Heart'* is examined, its stalk will be the 24 tattvas, beginning with earth; its petals, vidyatattvas and suddha-vidya; its pollen, the 64 kalas of Isvara and Sadasiva; its ovary, Sakti, the essence of Kalas; its seeds, the 51 forms of nadam; and the arul-sakti of the Lord Siva rests on it (as fragrance). (*Sivajnanabodham* IX. 3-c.)

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[2] Siddhanta Dipika, 1897. Vol I. VII. p. 153 ff.

Appendix II

கோயிற் திருப்பதிகம்*

KOYIR-RIRUPPATIGAM

Translation by

Tiruvachakamani K. M. Balasubramaniam, B.A., B.L.,

மாறி நின்றென்னை மயக்கிடும் வஞ்சப்
புலனைந்தின் வழியடைத்தமுதே
ஊறிநின்றென்னு ளெழுபரஞ்சோதி
யுள்ளவா காணவந்தருளாய்
தேறலின்தெளியே சிவபெருமானே
திருப்பெருந்துறை யுறை சிவனே
ஈறிலாப்பதங்க ளியாவையுங்கடந்த
இன்பமே யென்னுடையன்பே. (*1*)

1. The channels of the treacherous senses five
Which perversely hallucinated me
Thou didst block, and welling as ambrosia
Within my heart, didst rise as Light Supreme,
Come and show in grace Thy Truest Self.
Distilled honey and Siva of sacred Perunthurai.
O Mighty Bliss that transcendest all 'bodes
That know no end. My Love Personified.

அன்பினாலடியே னாவியோடாக்கை
ஆனந்தமாய்க் கசிந்துருக
என்பரமல்லா வின்னருடந்தா
யானிதற்கிலனோர் கைம்மாறு
முன்புமாய்ப்பின்பு முழுதுமாய்ப்பரந்த
முத்தனே முடிவிலாமுதலே
தென்பெருந்துறையாய் சிவபெருமானே
சீருடைச் சிவபுரத்தரைசே. (*2*)

2. Thou didst grant sweet grace beyond the worth
Of me, Thy slave so that my soul and frame
Mellow and melt with blissful rapture great.
I've nought with me to give in turn for this.
Thou Ever-free Who spread'st as all the things.
Thou Endless Source; Thou art before, behind.
Thou of South Perunthurai, O my Lord Siva.
Thou art the King of glorious Sivapuram too.

"A hymn sung by the Saint Manikka Vachakar in the temple at Chidambaram, the most revered shrine in South India and unique in combining the exoteric and esoteric aspects of *Saivam.*"

* By kind courtesy of Tiruvachakamani: his translation of the Hymn is here given: J.M.S.

அரைசனே யன்பர்க் கடியனே னுடைய
அப்பனே யாவியோ டாக்கை
புரைபுரை கனியப் புகுந்துநின் றுருக்கிப்
பொய்யிருள் கடிந்த மெய்ச்சுடரே
திரைபொரா மன்னு மமுதத் தெண்கடலே
திருப்பெருந்துறை யுறைசிவனே
உரையுணர் விறந்துநின் றுணர்வதோ ருணர்வே
யானுன்னை யுரைக்குமா றுணர்த்தே. (3)

3. O King and Sire to me, Thy saints' own slave.
Thou didst enter me and didst abide, soft'ning,
And melting all my soul and ev'ry pore of frame,
Thou Light of Truth dispelling lie's darkness,
Thou clear and biding waveless Nector-Sea,
O Siva Who dwell'st in sacred Perunthurai,
Thou stand'st as Gnosis beyond all word and thought,
Known by Gnosis' lone. To describe Thee teach me.

உணர்ந்த மாமுனிவ ரும்பரோ டொழிந்தா
ருணர்வுக்குந் தெரிவரும் பொருளே
இணங்கிலி யெல்லா வுயிர்கட்கு முயிரே
யெனைப்பிறப் பறுக்கு மெம்மருந்தே
திணிந்ததோ ரிருளிற் றெளிந்ததூ வெளியே
திருப்பெருந்துறை யுறை சிவனே
குணங்கடா மில்லா வின்பமே யுன்னைக்
குறுகினேற் கினி யென்ன குறையே. (4)

4. The sages versed in sacred lore and heavenly ones,
And all the rest can't apprehend Thee, Being Rare.
Thou art Peerless One and Soul of all the souls.
Our own Balm which curest me of "birth-malady".
Subtle Spotless Ether shining amidst the darkness dense.
O Siva who dwell'st in sacred Perunthurai.
O Bliss devoid of qualities. Henceforth,
What's the grievance here for me who have Thyself reached well?

குறைவிலா நிறைவே கோதிலா வமுதே
யீறிலாக் கொழுஞ் சுடர்க்குன்றே
மறையுமாய் மறையின் பொருளுமாய் வந்தென்
மனத்திடை மன்னிய மன்னே
சிறைபெரு நீர்போற் சிந்தைவாய்ப் பாயுந்
திருப்பெருந்துறை யுறைசிவனே
இறைவனே நீயென் னுடலிடங் கொண்டா
இனியுன்னை யென்னிரக் கேனே. (5)

5. O Plenary Fulness sans decrease. Ambrosia void of flaws.
Mount of Endless Splendour Luxurient.
As the Vedas themselves and as Vedas' Essence too
Camest Thou and dwell'st in my own heart, O King.

O Siva Who dwell'st in sacred Perunthurai,
And Who flow'st within my soul like bound-burst stream.
My Lord Who dwellest within my body-shrine.
What shall myself, henceforth, beg of Thee?

இரந்திரந்துருக என் மனத்துள்ளே
யெழுகின்றசோதியே யிமையோர்
சிரந்தனிற்பொலியுங் கமலச்சேவடியாய்
திருப்பெருந்துறை யுறைசிவனே
நிரந்தவாகாய நீர்நிலந்தீகா
லாயவை யல்லையாயாங்கே
கரந்ததோருருவே களித்தனனுன்னைக்
கண்ணுறக் கண்டு கொண்டின்றே. (6)

6. O Thou Splendrous Light emerging from within my soul,
While I beg and pray and melt in heart.
Thy own lotus-red feet shine upon the crowns of gods.
O Siva Who dwell'st in sacred Perunthurai,
Limitless ether, water and the earth and fire and wind—
Thou art all these; Thou art not. And Thou art of the form
Concealed in them.I do rejoice because
Today I've fixed my eyes on Thee and seen.

இன்றெனக்கருளி யிருள்கடிந்துள்ளத்
தெழுகின்ற ஞாயிறேபோன்று
நின்றநின்றன்மை நினைப்பறநினைந்தேன்
நீயலாற்பிறிது மற்றின்மை
சென்றுசென்றணுவாய்த் தேய்ந்துதேய்ந்தொன்றாந்
திருப்பெருந்துறை யுறைசிவனே
ஒன்றுநீயல்லை யன்றியொன்றில்லை
யாருன்னை யறியகிற்பாரே. (7)

7. Thou didst grace this day to me and did'st dispell darkness.
And, like the rising sun, Thou stood'st abiding in my soul.
Nought else subsists except Thee. Of this, Thy nature true
I thought devoid of thought and draw more near and near.
And, atom by atom wearing away, I become one with Thee.
Thou, O Siva Who dwellest in the sacred Perunthurai shrine.
Thou art not aught here and without Thee too there's naught.
Is there one who can e'er know the Truth about Thyself?

பார்பதமண்ட மனைத்துமாய்முளைத்துப்
பரந்ததோர் படரொளிப்பரப்பே

நீருறு தீயே நினைவதேலரிய
நின்மலா நின் னருள்வெள்ளச்

சீருறுசிந்தை யெழுந்ததோர் தேனே
திருப்பெருந்துறை யுறைசிவனே

யாருறவெனக்கிங் காரயலுள்ளார்
ஆனந்தமாக்குமென் சோதி. (8)

8. Thou Expanse of Light that stemmed'st and spread'st
As the earthly sphere, and heaven and all the rest of things.

Thou Fire in water too. Thou Pure One, hard for thought.
Thou Sweet Honey Which springest within the hearts of those

Who are filled with Thy own flood of grace.
O Siva Who dwell'st in sacred Perunthurai.

Who are all my Kinsmen, who are aliens, say.
O Jyothi Which dost yield me ecstacy.

சோதியாய்த்தோன்று முருவமேயருவாம்
ஒருவனே சொல்லுதற்கரிய

ஆதியேநடுவே யந்தமேபந்தம்
அறுக்குமானந்த மாகடலே

தீதிலாநன்மைத் திருவருட்குன்றே
திருப்பெருந்துறை யுறைசிவனே

யாது நீ போவதோர் வகையெனக்கருளாய்
வந்துநின் னிணையடி தந்தே. (9)

9. O Form of Light Resplendent seen. Thou the Formless One.
Thou art the First, the Midst and Last, Who art so hard

For words to point. Thou art the Sea of mighty Bliss
Which could'st wash my earthly bonds away.

Thou Sacred Mount of Grace and Good, sans ill;
O Siva Who dwell'st in sacred Perunthurai.

Having Thyself come and blessed me with Thy pair of feet,
How canst Thou in fairness leave me? Speak with grace.

தந்ததுன் தன்னைக் கொண்டதென் றன்னைச்
சங்கராயார் கொலோசதுரர்
அந்தமொன்றில்லா வானந்தம்பெற்றேன்
யாதுநீபெற்ற தொன்றென்பால்
சிந்தையேகோயில் கொண்டவெம்பெருமான்
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எந்தையேயீசா வுடலிடங்கொண்டாய்
யானிதற்கிலனோர் கைம்மாறே. (10)

10. Thyself is what Thou hast given; myself is what Thou hast got.
Who is cleverer of the two? O Sankara, do say.
The rapture bliss that knows no end I have well gained from Thee.
Is there e'en a single thing which Thou hast got from me?
Our Lord Who hast my heart converted as Thy holy shrine.
O Siva Who dwellest in the sacred Perunthurai.
O Father and O Isa Who hast made my frame Thy abode.
I have nought to give in turn for all this unto Thee.

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NEAR PLACES OF INTEREST
—AN INTRODUCTION TO
PONDICHERRY

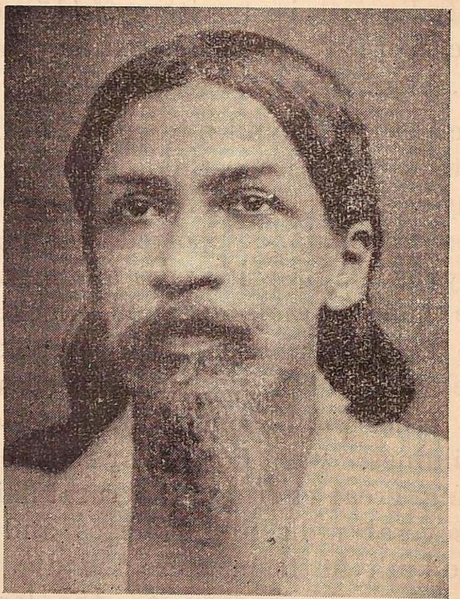
This pretty town is the prodigal daughter now reunited to her mother country. About three centuries ago, found as a coastal factory by the French, and developed from 1674 by Francois Martin, she has grown to its modern form and proportions of a clean, neat and well-laid out town. Pondicherry, the capital of French India with its territory of 115 square miles have since merged into the Indian Union on 1st November, 1954.

Pondicherry is 105 miles by road south of Madras, and about 46 miles from Chidambaram, and is also reached by rail via Villupuram. Along her seafront runs a wide esplanade, supported by a masonry wall, with many of its palatial port and customs offices, mercantile houses, and hotels over looking the sea. The Place du Governement, the barracks, the High Court, the Public library, the Cathedral of Notre Dame and other public offices are some of the noteworthy buildings. The Ponnaiyar runs close to the town lending great charm to the rural neighbourhood and the several mills and colleges and the Hindu temples too built in the measure and dignity of South Indian temples add beauty to the locality. The French Academy and the French college constitute a destinctive feature of the present day cultural life of the place.

Pondicherry had figured greatly in the Anglo-French wars of the 18th century, Dupleix playing the leading role. She was finally restored to the French

in 1816; and since then she had prospered into the attractive town she presents herself today. Its population is now about a lakh ; and as a port touched by French and continental steamers had enjoyed good trade and a busy life.

Beyond all this, Pondicherry has during the last forty years earned a greater reputation for Sri Aurobindo's stay, and his Ashram grown into an International centre for seekers after a divine life of Truth, Service and spiritual development.



* "Sri Aurobindo had, while leading the Swadeshi movement-that great national struggle for Independence-during the first decade of the century-felt the call for a deeper spiritual work and, in consequence, retired from politics and came and settled down here. This was in 1910. It was, however in 1926, when he had attained to siddhi in his personal sadhana that he

* Contributed by an esteemed friend

founded the Ashram and started accepting spiritual seekers from India and abroad. This was the beginning of his spiritual work and the aim of it was the preparation for the coming of the spiritual age in the social evolution of man. Sri Aurobindo had seen that the scientific age had reached its climax and that man had now to prepare for a new phase of cultural life. In other words, the difficulties and crises of the present situation called for the development of higher spiritual faculties of the human consciousness. The Ashram was contemplated as the first centre for attempting this new creation of life.

"It had naturally begun with a small number which steadily increased and now it consists of a community of about a thousand souls, leading a rich and varied life. It is a complete picture of a more or less self contained community living with agricultural farms, engineering workshops, printing press and publication department, numerous cottage industries, besides the essential services necessary to life. 'Work' has, in the discipline for spiritual life, an important place beside meditation and, therefore, in the Ashram normally every member undertakes some work, which he pursues as service and consecration.

"In the history of the Ashram a time came when Sri Aurobindo felt that the spiritual values that the Ashram had pursued should be given, for a wider benefit, an extension through education. A school was opened in 1943 and the same raised to a university in 1952. Thus the institution now known as 'Sri Aurobindo International University Centre' came into being. The aim here is to seek the growth of integral personality, the personality which is essentially a soul with mind and body as its instruments.

"Since Sri Aurobindo's passing the Mother has guided the growth and destiny of the Ashram and the University. But she had, in fact, joined Sri Aurobindo and his work in 1914 and has been the head of the Ashram ever since it was founded in 1926.

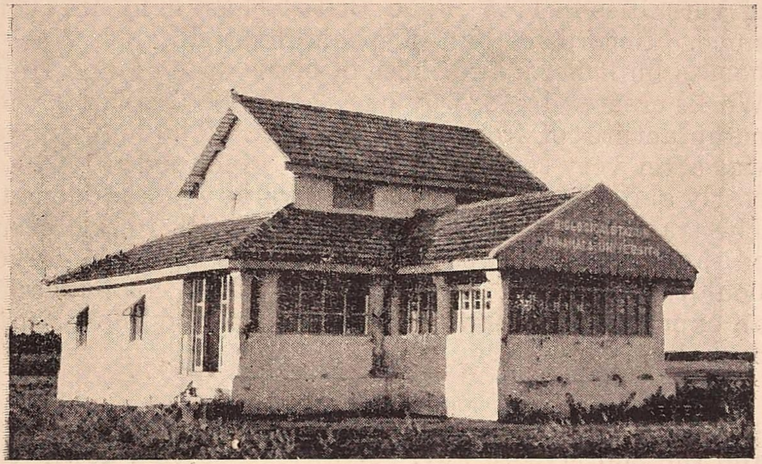
"The Ashram and the University Centre possess an atmosphere of their own, which is usually the happiest experience of the place for a visitor. The general organisation and discipline too make a great impression. They are today an outstanding institution of the country and a special attraction to the cultural visitors from abroad. They have indeed put Pondicherry on the map of the world".

The Ashram is the dynamic phase of Sri Arobindo's yoga and of the Mother, who both together hold this great institution with a soul force inspired and almost divine.

PORTONOVO

Portonovo, the place name apparently given by the Portuguese, is known as Parangippettai (Feringhi town) for its earliest European associations with the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes and the English; also called Muhammad Bunder for its Muslim associations. It was formerly one of the two major sea ports, and the fourth largest town in the South Arcot district, and is now almost an old world town.

Sixteen miles by road and eight by rail from Chidambaram, Portonovo is reached from the Railway Station crossing the villages of Agaram, B. Manambady and Ariagoshti, a distance of 3 miles on the way. It is a Union Panchayat with a population of about 18,000; a fair portion Muslims. There is a District Board High School, Port and Customs Office, a Fishery Station, and most important, the Biological Station of the Annamalai University.



Kembu] **Biological Station**

Its History :

Its history dates back to her first European settlement by the Portuguese at the end of 16th Century. The Dutch followed in 1643, and occupied it till as late as 1825 at broken intervals, (their factory sacked by the Maharattas and Haidar). A cemetry known as Hollanders Tottam bears witness to their occupation. The Danes besides had a factory here, on the river bank devastated often by floods, and rebuilt again. Their leading men are referred to on the epitaphs of those dead and buried in the Dutch Cemetry aforementioned. A portion of the former Danish factory still stands, occupied latterly by the English Iron works, and now in possession of a Muslim lady Haji Muhammed Makdoom Nachiyar.

The town and the settlements had suffered irretrievably by frequent raids and military occupations of Haidar and his French allies; the English under Sir Eyre Coote, and his last decisive victory on the plains of Porto Novo gave the place finally to the British restored to them by the Treaty of Versailles in 1785. The British has held it ever since. Records of 1803–5 speak of the English Warehouses built here; and those of later date of the Iron Works erected in 1824 by one Mr. J. M. Heath for the manufacture of iron bars in India. The enterprise was after very severe trial finally given up in 1867 as costly and un-economic. The iron works was abandoned. The traces of its extensive ruins are still to be seen on the river bank, west of the Customs House as large boulders of brick and chunam rolled about, and an expansive site, with charred sand and black iron deposits.

After the stormy days of the Anglo-French wars and the 2nd Mysore war, Porto-Novo settled down to quiet life developed into a minor port, with anchorage

for visiting steamers at two miles off the shore, the mouth of the river. The trade was export of Groundnut Kernels to ports in Europe, Paddy and rice to Ceylon, Straits, Indo-China and Java until in 1942 the trade declined, as the groundnut trade moved away to its growing centres. The present coastal trade consists of salt from its salt pans, and paddy taken to Tuticorin, Malabar and etc. The place is now almost devoid of any activity, her once busy mercantile community, content with agriculture, manufacture of mats and weaving of cotton fabrics followed as small cottage industries.

A Muslim Centre

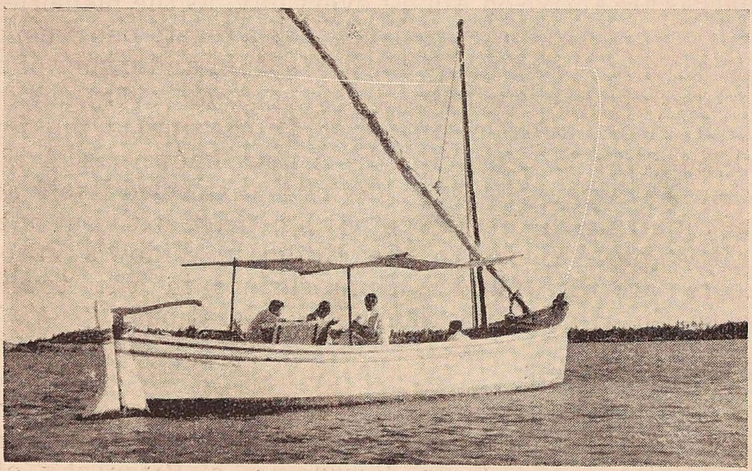
Porto Novo is spotted with as many as 360 durgas wherein their leading men of light and learning lie interred, and with ten mosques, as prayer houses. The Durgas are active on almost every day, as the memories of those interred are revived with a feast; one among them being Malumiar -- a sea Captain and owner of a number of vessels reputed to be seen on every one of them, at one and the same time! Of the durgas, one for Al-Kurz-bi-a lady canonised - is now known as Arai-Kasu Nachiyar - the word having transformed itself as one requiring the devout to pay a homage with but one half a pie - almost to the Biblical Widow's mite. There are Siva and Vishnu shrines in the town, where the Hindus pay their pious adorations.

A Literary Centre :

Porto Novo is famed for her galaxy of Muslim poets, of whom the more famous are - Umaru Pulavar (the author of *Ksheera Puranam*; a Biography of Muhammed, the Prophet, which was composed and inaugurated at this place), Saiyad Abdul Kadir Nayinar, Haji Kadir Ali Maraikkair, Kadir Asana Maraikkair, Sheik Nayina Marakayar and the luminaries amongst Hindus being Tiruchirrambalam-udayar-adimai Muthu Tandavaraya Pillai, S. Velusami Pillai and P. Krishnaswami Pillai.

THE UNIVERSITY BIOLOGICAL STATION *

Facing the expansive and foaming sea-board and close to the north bank of thee stuary of the Vellar, the University Biological Station is by far the best attraction to inquiring visitors to Porto-Novo. Housed in a modest building which was formerly the District Board Travellers' Bungalow, it has seen the beginning of biological research and its present developments these twenty-four years. Begun as a labour of love and service by Prof. R. V. Seshaiya, the head of the Department of Zoology, the University in 1951, esta-



blished the Biological station for estuarine research. And soon, the Government in appreciation of the research carried out, assigned the building to the University in 1953, along with another 113 acres. Scientists, Zoologists, and Scholars, Indian and foreign

* See infra page 22, also Brochure on the Biological research station of the Annamalai University.

have given the highest praise for the research carried out and the data collected at the station. Equipped with latest scientific instruments and a motor boat of 7·26 tons capacity, specially built for conducting experiments in marine biology, the biological station has carried out a programme of intensive hydrological and biological investigations.

It is hoped that ere long, the Union Government and the University Grants Commission will come to the aid of this branch of knowledge to make the station the first of its kind in India, as it is already the one that has given rich promise therefor.

SEVA MANDIR BASIC SCHOOL – AGARAM PORTONOVO.

Basic Education for Life through life! A Seva Mandir Basic School blessed by, and the foundation of which was laid by Mahatma Gandhiji in 1921 is a Nationalist Christian benevolence by a Danish Lady Miss Annie Marie Peterson. It is located in Agaram village, a mile from Portonovo Railway Station. Miss

Seva Mandir

Peterson ran it through her own resources and that of friends in Denmark for 28 years, until in 1949 the school was recognised. Gandhiji had visited this mandir twice, and blessed the school, and his personal friend Miss. Peterson. The School had grown these 34 years, achieving good results but little known outside its limits! On 9th January 1951 Miss. Peterson in her 72nd year passed into eternity, mourned and blessed as a Servant of God.

The School and its adjuncts stand amidst a charming sylvan area of 11 acres, secluded away from the road and bustle of life. Orchards of mangoes and guavas and Plantains and blossoming beds shedding flowers of various colours give an attraction hardly to be met with elsewhere. A number of ponds within the grounds promote pisciculture; and they supply the Department of Fisheries and the country around with good specimens for rearing purposes.

Amidst such natural scenery, nestles this haven of peace, with a swarm of nearly 300 inmates all residential, 180 orphan girls between 6 and 14 and 85 women Trainees between 25 and 35 years of age, 7 teachers, a weaving master and few servants. The girls young and old run their own kitchen-cleaning and preparing their food, and keep the whole place trim, besides attending to a school curriculam from morning 8 A.M. to 6 P.M.

The teacher training is for two years and the Basic school runs to the 8th grade. During the period, the pupils receive besides the graded education, training in Music and Painting, Spinning and Weaving, making of korai mats and thatties, Tailoring, Gardening and other useful arts. Trainees, and pupils lead

a life in common; the elders taking sisterly care of the young ones, and all under the parental care of the Warden Miss. Chakko – a talented lady and disciplinarian – who has dedicated her life for the service. The inmates move about with beaming eyes and a happy countenance, infusing life and sunshine to the atmosphere. The health of the inmates is looked after by another dedicated lady – a Dane from the Nellikuppam Danish Mission who looks after the medical needs of the mandir, goes about in the morning to the neighbouring *cheries* giving free medical aid to the suffering, and treats patients in the evening from her dispensary within the compound.

The Seva Mandir has served the country, under the blessings of Mahatmaji's and a noble Dane, and has a bright future.

NEIVELI LIGNITE STATION

A prospectful prospect is Neiveli for Lignite! Nestling in the heart of South Arcot district, 22 miles by road from Annamalainagar, and by rail from Cuddalore Neiveli is now the centre of attraction for all prospective industrialists. The project is to cover an area of 100 square miles and produce 2000 millions tons of brown coal. The Mnistry of Productions, Central Government took up the project in 1942 and has spent so far a crore and twenty lakhs of rupees, and proposes to spend another 80 crores in the Second Five Year Plan.

Almost a town-ship has arisen on the site, with 500 well built houses for its employees, residences for its officers and Engineers, and an information centre which is getting ready. The Neiveli Railway line and Station divides the present mine area and the offices, a thermal station, a Hospital, the residences and

other buildings in construction. The Information Centre contains a number of illuminated charts and diagrams, a large scale master plan of the project which gives it an atmosphere of reality and its assured future.

To-day, on a central test excavation, to a depth of 193 feet, Mr. M. S. Devaraj, the Mining Superintendent has collected 30 tons of Lignite for test purposes and its results are awaited. This pilot project as sanctioned by the Government is getting completed, and ere long the full project will be taken on hand and pushed through. The lignite is expected to feed the thermal stations at Neiveli, Madurai and Madras augmenting the power from Pykara and Mettur; supply fuel for existing and future industrial boilers, raw material for road tar, liquid fuel, petrol, fertilizers, a ceramic factory utilising the beautiful white clay deposits, cement, textile, brick, tile and other industries.

By 1961, the project expects to excavate four millions of tons of lignite and use it also for fertiliser plants, for ammonium sulphate, and augment the present supply of domestic fuel by 300,000 tons of briquets and prevent the heavy disafforestation now on.

The future of the project is bright and combined with the offered help of Eastern Germany to give it a helping hand, the Neiveli lignite mine is one to make the once expansive fields of waving corn into a New-castle of modern industries in the heart of Tamilnad !*

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* Vide p. 20 infra; also Brochure "The Neiveli lignite project and the Annamalai University."

VADALUR

Vadalur held sacred to the memory of St. Ramalinga Swamigal (1823–1874 A.D.)of *Tiru-arut-pa* fame is 24 miles by bus from Chidambaram and 43 by Rail on the Cuddalore-Vriddhachalam line. The Arut-jothi mandir which the Saint constructed here in 1872 for worship of the all-pervading immanence as Light-Holy Light! is the chief attraction. It is a spacious, octagonal building, dome capped and built on an eminence from which the four gopuras of Chidambaram are visible from afar. The mandir has received elaborate renovation recently through Sri Krupananda Variar and other devotees of the Swamigal. Unlike any other temple, the rituals of worship are

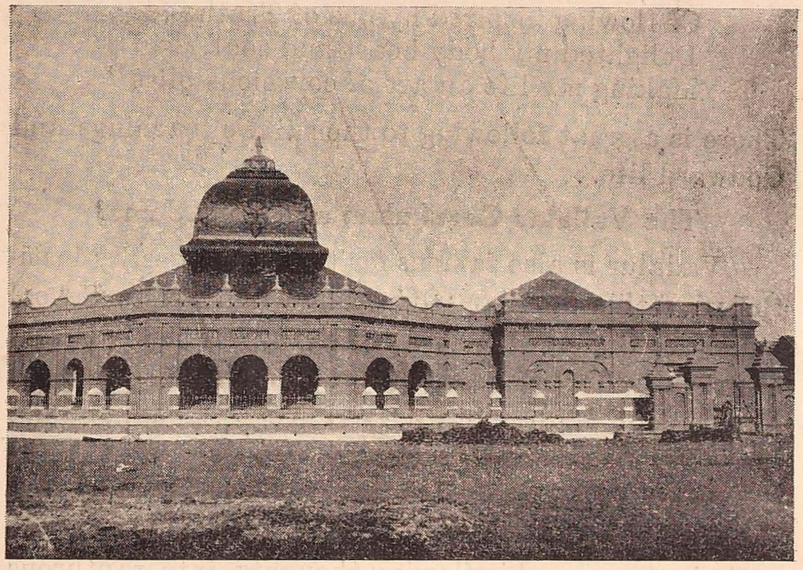

Photo: *Kembu*] The Arut-jothi Mandir

original. Devotees gather here in several thousands on Poosam days every month, and from all over Tamilakam on Thai Poosam Day.

Tiru-arut-pa of about 1000 pieces covering over 800 printed pages of royal octavo size are the most popular in Tamil for the heart-melting and stirring appeal to the Most High. The sanctum of the Swami where in he lived his days and locked himself in a room from which he has not emerged since, is shown in Mottukkuppam three miles away from the mandir. It is believed that the saint is still alive and will re-appear. Yogi Shuddhananda Bharatiar says of the Swamigal :

" Super conscient sage is he,
The Seer poet of soulful life
The prophet of supreme Grace–Light
Ramalinga's honeyed fountain
Of flowing inspired hymns of Truth
Delighted my body heart and soul
Making my life an art of conscious bliss "

There is a great following to the saint's teachings and Godward life.

The Vallalar Gurukulam and Yoga Samaj

Vadalur is also famous for two other worthy institutions : the Vallalar Gurukulam and Basic School and Yoga Samaj run respectively by the noble efforts of Sri Omandur Ramaswami Reddiar–a former Chief Minister of Madras State, and Yogi Shuddhananda Bharathiar–seer–poet and philosopher. The Yoga Samaj is his sanctum and the poet with his wonderful lyrical gifts, a deep religious passion and living optimism weaves his flowing thoughts into rapturous poetry of charm and vigour and an inimitable prose

in English and in Tamil. The Yogi has here found his life maxim.

" The world is my temple; heart its sanctum,
All beings are my life; to serve them is my worship"

Vadalur is worthy of a pilgrimage.

TIRUNARAIYUR*

—the home of St. Nambi-andar-Nambi

Tirunaraiyur - the home of St. Nambi - andar-Nambi is eleven miles S. W. of Chidambaram by road to Kattumannar-gudi. The local legend says that a Rishi transformed into a Crane by a curse regained his former form by his devotions to Siva here.

Raja Raja Abhaya Kulasekhara I
Tirunaraiyur

Tirunaraiyur, containing the twin shrines to Mulastana and Sundareswara (11th century) is more famous for the sanctum of Pollappillaiyar – the Vinayaka – Who as preceptor to the young archaka, Nambi-revealed through him to Raja Raja I, the sacred spot in the Chidambaram temple, where the collection of the Tevara Hymns lay locked up centuries ago.

* See infra p. 108-109

It is said the Vinayaka accepted the offerings laid before Him by the artless young baktha-Nambi the archaka-and both of them became famed in Saiva history ever after. Nambi as tutored by Vinayaka is reputed to be the author of ten works collected together in the Eleventh Tirumurai of the Saivite canonical texts; and that he codified the Saiva writings of the day into the eleven of the twelve books. His life is one to be compared with that of St. Kannappar-the Hunter Saint, the artless simple soul to whom the Lord showed His grace, within a brief period of six days—Ineffable lives lived by great Souls: yet simple and devout.

GANGAIKONDACHOLAPURAM

Gangaikondacholapuram, the City of Rajendra Chola I–(A. D. 1012–1044), and for many generations the capital of his successors, is on the confines of the Trichirappalli and South Arcot Districts. It is now an unpretentious village of a few houses, 29 miles from Chidambaram and 25 from Kumbakonam by road. Rajendra I succeeding his father Raja Raja the Great, moved his capital from Tanjore and founded here a magnificent city and a temple dedicated to Sri Brihadisvara: *Gangaikonda Cholechcharam*-a counter part in many respects to *Rajarajechcharam*, his father had built at Tanjore.

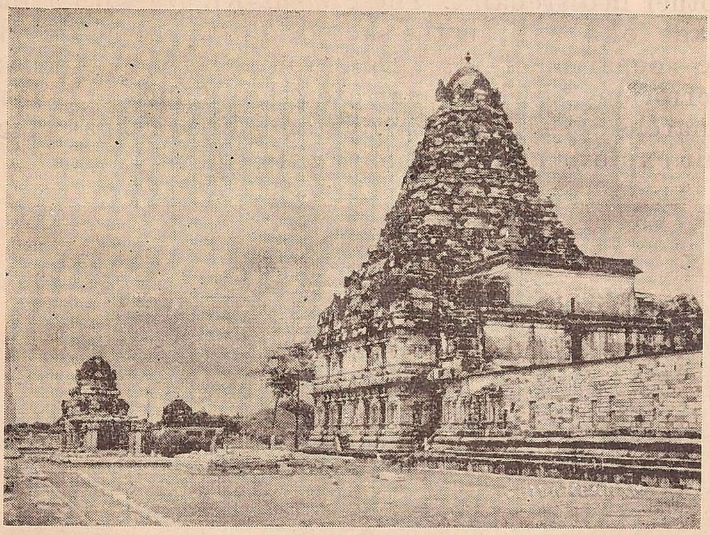

Photo-Kembu] Gangaikondacholechcharam

The temple was to commemorate his own farther conquests of several Kingdoms on the Ganges valley and the island of Ceylon. "Gangaikonda Chola" was one of the *birudas* adopted by Rajendra in consequence, and "Mudikonda Chola" after his conquest of Ceylon. The Tiruvalankadu plates* state that he got the vanqui-

* For text and translation see. S.I.I. III. iii. pp. 383-439.

shed kings of the north to carry the sacred waters of the Ganges and pour it into a lake 'Chola Gangam' dug by him, and called poetically "a liquid pillar of victory". This enormous lake (now in ruins) with an embankment 16 miles long, north to west, was then filled by two branches of the Coleroon and the Vellar, and its waters spread fertility over vast irrigable tracts of 60 miles square in area.

The great temple stands all alone in forgotten majesty within a huge quadrangle 584 feet by 322 feet. The vast ruins of its former shrines and battlements and walls are now cleared by the Department of Archaeology, with only the shrines of the Goddess Brihannayaki, Kali and Ganesa in worship and another in disrepairs. The *Simhak-Kinaru* with a huge facade of a Yali, is the sacred *Tirtha* of the temple. The department of Epigraphy have noted 20 inscriptions,* which narrate the doings of later monarchs: the Chola, Pandya and Vijayanagar kings, their exploits and devotional gifts.

Photo-Kembu] Ananda Tandava of Lord Nataraja [*11th Century*

* Vide Epi Rep for 1892 and 1908.

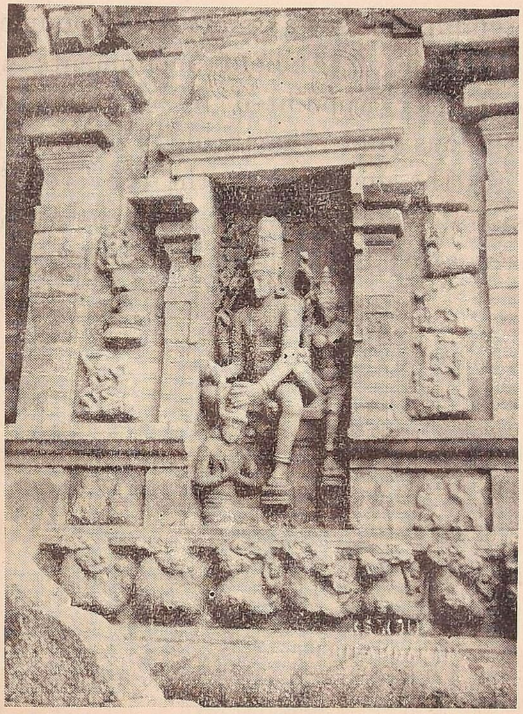

Photo-Kembu]　　Chandeswaranugraha Murti.　　[*11th Century*

The temple bears some of the best panels of sculptures on its outer walls–those of the Ananda Tandava of Nataraja, Bhiksha-atana, Kala-samharamurti, Ardha-narisvara being the most noted, and Chandeswaranugrahamurti, the most outstanding.

The majestic gopura entrance into the temple is now a heap of ruins, as well its battered walls. A portion of its cloistered corridors still stand to tell the tale of its former grandeur, and that its entire quarry of stones having gone to the making of the Lower Anicut, six and a half miles away. And, the once flourishing city of Rajendra has disappeared to its entirety leaving to the antiquarian an anguish, and the utilitarian a quarry of bricks!

The temple is now a protected monument under the Preservation of Ancient monuments Act. The Executive Officer appointed by the Department of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments gives his care to the pious and the devoted for daily and occasional worship; where once the mighty Chola gave himself away to the Lord of his heart!

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